

**NARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP NORTH**  
*Opening Paragraph*  
**Ten Translations**

Months and days are the wayfarers of a hundred generations, the years too, going and coming, are wanderers. For those who drift life away on a boat, for those who meet age leading a horse by the mouth, each day is a journey, the journey itself home. Among ancients, too, many died on a journey. And so I too--for how many years--drawn by a cloud wisp wind, have been unable to stop thoughts of rambling.

David Landis Barnhill

*Bashō's Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Bashō*. Albany: SUNY, 2005.

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The months and days, the travelers of a hundred ages;  
the years that come and go, voyagers too.  
floating away their lives on boats,  
growing old as they lead horses by the bit,  
for them, each day a journey, travel their home.  
Many, too, are the ancients who perished on the road.  
Some years ago, seized by wanderlust, I wandered along the shores of the sea.

Haruo Shirane

*Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002.

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The moon and sun are eternal travelers. Even the years wander on. A lifetime adrift in a boat, or in old age leading a tired horse into the years, every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home. From the earliest times there have always been some who perished along the road. Still I have always been drawn by wind-blown clouds into dreams of a lifetime of wandering. . . .

Sam Hamill

*The Essential Bashō*. Boston: Shambhala, 1999.

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The months and days are the travelers of eternity. The years that come and go are also voyagers. Those who float away their lives on ships or who grow old leading horses are forever journeying, and their homes are wherever their travels take them. Many of the men of old died on the road, and I too for years past have been stirred by the sight of a solitary cloud drifting with the wind to ceaseless thoughts of roaming. . . .

Donald Keene

*The Narrow Road to Oku*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1996.

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The months and days are wayfarers of a hundred generations, and the years that come and go are also travelers. Those who float all their lives on a boat or reach their old age leading a horse by the bit make travel out of each day and inhabit travel. Many in the past also died while traveling. In which year it was I do not recall, but I, too, began to be lured by the wind like a fragmentary cloud and have since been unable to resist wanderlust. . . .

Hiroaki Sato

*Bashō's Narrow Road; Spring and Autumn Passages*. Berkeley: Stone Bridge, 1996.

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The sun and the moon are eternal voyagers; the years that come and go are travelers too. For those whose lives float away on boats, for those who greet old age with hands clasping the lead ropes of horses, travel is life, travel is home. And many are the men of old who have perished as they journeyed.

I myself fell prey to wanderlust some years ago, desiring nothing better than to be a vagrant cloud scudding before the wind. . . .

Helen Craig McCullough

*Classical Japanese Prose: An Anthology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.

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The passing days and months are eternal travellers in time. The years that come and go are travellers too. Life itself is a journey; and as for those who spend their days upon the waters in ships and those who grow old leading horses, their very home is the open road. And some poets of old there were who died while travelling.

Then came a day when the clouds drifting along with the wind aroused a wanderlust in me, and I set off on a journey to roam along the seashores. . . .

Dorothy Britton

*A Haiku Journey: Bashô's Narrow Road to a Far Province*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1974.

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The months and days are the wayfarers of the centuries and as yet another year comes round, it, too, turns traveler. Sailors whose lives float away as they labor on boats, horsemen who encounter old age as they draw the horse around once more by the bit, they also spend their days in travel and make their home in wayfaring. Over the centuries many famous men have met death on the way; and I, too, though I do not know what year it began, have long yielded to the wind like a loosened cloud and, unable to give up my wandering desires, have taken my way along the coast. . . .

Earl Miner

*Japanese Poetic Diaries*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

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Moon and sun are passing figures of countless generations, and years coming or going wanderers too. Drifting life away on a boat or meeting age leading a horse by the mouth, each day is a journey and the journey itself home. Amongst those of old were many that perished upon the journey. So — when was it — I, drawn like blown cloud, couldn't stop dreaming of roaming. . . .

Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu.

*Back Roads to Far Towns*. New York: Mushinsha, 1968.

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Days and months are travellers of eternity. So are the years that pass by. Those who steer a boat across the sea, or drive a horse over the earth till they succumb to the weight of years, spend every minute of their lives travelling. There are a great number of ancients, too, who died on the road. I myself have been tempted for a long time by the cloud-moving wind — filled with a strong desire to wander. . . .

Nobuyuki Yuasa

*Narrow Road to the Deep North, and Other Travel Sketches*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966.

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