

Five Poems

by

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AMARAVATI

(lit. 'the Deathless Realm', a monastery in Hertfordshire)

Lovely October sunny afternoon. The
flower beds are full of chickweed & daisies.
My love lies resting behind the white
cloud & my faith is a robin in the holly.
&, if I have learnt anything then it is here,
alone with the other things, the red
maple beginning to live up to its name

PORTRAIT OF BASHŌ

(Cover picture of *The Narrow Road
to the Deep North*: Penguin Classics)

Though the skin is hard, the priestly coat grey,
the lines on the face undulate like meadows

Because the bamboo pole has seen the Deep North
the eyes are careful, yet twinkling with surprise

Under the white hat there is a lonely road
singing of a frog, or the world in blossom

ANOTHER RAW BLUE MORNING

The patch was cleared & planted
crocosmia & mallow
burdock and nettle

Do they fight it out or are they dancing
with each other?

My anger & my love, they are
old companions, they have
been walking for a long time
to enjoy their flowers together

THINKING WITH THE EYES OF YOUR FEET

Cold black ash from an old fire
freshly fallen light swathes of snow
cut bracken mingled with millions
of brown birch seeds
moss

These combine interweave
make weird wonderful also
utterly normal shapes
these colours of the February earth
this tapestry

I SEARCH FOR SMALL THINGS

shells of snails
under the hedges

the dew on a leaf
dripping in puddles

all for the robin
to drink, all

these things, so
self contained

these small things
immaculate