

'A special visitor is coming today,' our father told us.
'Who?' we asked, stopping our game of leapfrog.
We were not used to visitors.
'Bashō,' he said with a smile. 'The great poet Matsuo Bashō.'
'The great poet Matsuo what?' Izumi giggled.





**‘His friends built him a hut.
They planted the rare banana plant,
the Bashō, just outside.
And the great poet called himself
Bashō from then on.’**



**We children, Izumi and Ren and Yoshi,
had heard about the Great Poet before.
Our mother and father had told us.
Our neighbours, especially the village poet
over the hill, could talk about nothing else.**



**‘Bashō is walking a long way
through all kinds of weather
to look at things,’
our father said.
‘Like what?’ little Yoshi asked.**



**'A tree or a waterfall; a shrine
or a flower,' our mother told us.
'Bashō looks and looks
and looks,' our father said.
'And then he writes his poems,
special poems that will last
forever,' our mother told us.**

