

Kaguya

Lit only by the moon,
In a dense grove, a man cuts bamboo
Hears, from a stalk, a melody.
He could not comprehend its beauty.
From the stalk came an infant princess;
From life, there rose life.

The child was filled with life;
She grew quickly, rising like the moon.
She was called a shining princess,
But she loved the mud and the grass and the bamboo.
As she grew, so did her staggering beauty,
And everywhere she went, she sang a melody.

Word of the princess spread like a melody.
Five noble men courted her, and paid with their lives,
Although the men heard only whispers of her beauty.
She was unobtainable, the moon,
For they did not know the bamboo,
And so they would never know the princess.

The emperor sent for the Princess.
He asked for her marriage with a melody,
But the princess was from the bamboo.
And though she did not ask for his life,
He too, could not reach the moon,
And would be left with only the image of her beauty.

In summer, her eyes filled with tears as she realized the earth's beauty.
The girl was not an earthly princess
And she would have to return to her people on the moon.
She had now heard the birds in trees, singing their melody.
Her celestial punishment was to understand life
And for it to be cut away like bamboo.

The princess returned to the grove.
One last time, she reveled in its beauty.
Heavenly beings came from the sky to take life.
They placed a feather robe unto the princess,
And she no longer heard the melody.
She returned to the moon.

From the rustle of bamboo to the silence of the moon
She had fallen in love with beauty of earth's melody
The princess of the moon, sentenced to the punishment of life