

Jens Klimek

Cherry Blossoms

verses from old Japan for mixed choir a cappella



The following texts originate from a collection of 100 specimens of Japanese *Tanka* poetry collected in the 13th Century C.E., with some of the poems dating back to the 7th Century translated by William N. Porter. *Tanka* is a 31 syllable format in the pattern 5-7-5-7-7. Most of these poems were written about the time of the Norman Conquest and display a sophistication that western literature would not achieve for a long time thereafter. These little gems are on themes such as nature, the round of the seasons, the impermanence of life, and the vicissitudes of love. There are obvious Buddhist and Shinto influences throughout. Porter's notes put the poems into a cultural and historical context. Each poem is illustrated in this edition with an 18th century Japanese woodcut by an anonymous illustrator.

UKON

Wasuraruru
Mi woba omowazu
Chikahite-shi
Hito no inochi no
Oshiku mo aru kana.

UKON

**MY broken heart I don't lament,
To destiny I bow;
But thou hast broken solemn oaths,—
I pray the Gods may now
Absolve thee from thy vow.**

The Lady Ukon is supposed to have been deserted by her husband, and in this poem she regrets, not so much her own sorrow, as the fact that he has broken his sworn oath, and is therefore in danger of divine vengeance. The illustration shows her all alone at the gate, with the house in the background, evidently waiting for the husband who has forsaken her.

SUTOKU IN

Se wo hayami
Iwa ni sekaruru
Taki-gawa no
Warete mo sue ni
Awan to zo omou.

THE RETIRED EMPEROR SUTOKU

**THE rock divides the stream in two,
And both with might and main
Go tumbling down the waterfall;
But well I know the twain
Will soon unite again.**

The town of Kamakura, where is the great bronze image of Buddha Amida, was built by this Emperor, who reigned A.D. 1124-1141; he was then forced by his father, the ex-Emperor Toba, to abdicate in favour of his brother, the Emperor Konoye; afterwards he entered the church, and died in the year 1164, an exile in the Province of Sanuki. This verse is intended to suggest the parting of two lovers, who will eventually meet again.

DŌ-IN HOSHI

Omoi-wabi
Satemo inochi wa
Aru mono wo
Uki ni taenu wa
Namida nari keru.

THE PRIEST DŌ-IN

**HOW sad and gloomy is the world,
This world of sin and woe!
Ah! while I drift along Life's stream,
Tossed helpless to and fro,
My tears will ever flow.**

The Priest Dō-in was a member of the Fujiwara family. The date of this verse is not known, but it was probably written in the twelfth century. The illustration shows the priest alone in his hut, lamenting over the sorrows of humanity.

GON CHŪ-NAGON
MASAFUSA

Takasago no
Once no zakura
Saki ni keru
Toyama no kasumi
Tatazu mo aranan.

**THE ASSISTANT IMPERIAL
ADVISED MASAFUSA**

**THE cherry trees are blossoming
On Takasago's height;
Oh may no mountain mist arise,
No clouds so soft and white,
To hide them from our sight.**

This poet was the son of Chika-nari Ooi, and died in the year 1112. Takasago is on the sea-coast in the Province of Harima, and is also mentioned in another verse.

Masafusa with his attendant appears in the illustration admiring the cherry trees on the mountains, over which, however, the clouds are already beginning to gather.

ŌYE NO CHISATO

Tsuki mireba
Chiji ni mono koso
Kanashi kere
Waga mi hitotsu no
Aki ni wa aranedo.

CHISATO ŌYE

**THIS night the cheerless autumn moon
Doth all my mind enthrall;
But others also have their griefs,
For autumn on us all
Hath cast her gloomy pall.**

Chisato Ōye is said to have lived about the end of the ninth century; he was the son of a Councillor, and a very fertile poet. He was also famous as a philosopher, and acted as tutor to the Emperor Sei-wa, who reigned A.D. 859-876.

The titles refer to the authors of the specific poem.

UKON
UKON
duration: 2'

THE RETIRED EMPEROR SUTOKU
SUTOKU IN
duration: 2'

THE PRIEST DŌ-IN
DŌ-IN HOSHI
duration: 4'

THE ASSISTANT IMPERIAL ADVISER MASAFUSA
GON CHŪ-NAGON MASAFUSA
duration: 2'

CHISATO ŌYE
ŌYE NO CHISATO
duration: 2½'

Cherry Blossoms

verses from old Japan for mixed choir a cappella

UKON
UKON

Jens Klimek

$\text{♩} = 50$

SOPRANO *p*
My bro-ken heart I don't la - ment, _____ to des - ti - ny my bow;

ALTO *p*
My bro-ken heart I don't la - ment, _____ to des - ti - ny my bow;

TENOR *p*
My bro-ken heart I don't la - ment, _____ to des - ti - ny my bow; but *mp*

BASS *p*
My bro-ken heart I don't la - ment, _____ to des - ti - ny my bow; _____ but *mp*

5 *mp* 1.
but thou hast bro-ken so - lemn oath, My bro-ken heart I don't la -
mp so - lemn oath, *p*
but thou hast bro-ken so-lemn, so lemn oath, My bro-ken heart I don't la -
thou hast bro - - - ken oath, _____
thou hast bro - - - ken oath, _____

8

ment, to oath, I pray the Gods may now, I pray the Gods may now,
 ment, to so-lemn oath I pray the Gods may now,
 to bro-ken so-lemn oath, so-lemn oath,
 to bro-ken so-lemn oath, so-lemn oath,

12 *f* pray, I pray the Gods may

I pray the Gods may now, I pray the Gods may now,
 I pray the Gods may now, I pray the Gods may,
 I pray the Gods may now, I pray the Gods may now,
 I pray the Gods may now, I pray the Gods may now,

16 *p* ab - solve thee from thy vow, ab - solve thee

ab - solve thee from thy vow, ab - solve thee
 ab - solve thee from thy vow, ab - solve thee
 ab - solve thee from thy vow, ab - solve thee
 ab - solve thee from thy vow, ab - solve thee

19

pp
from thy vow.

pp
from thy vow.

pp
from thy vow.

pp
from thy vow. *p* My bro - ken heart I don't la - ment.



THE RETIRED EMPEROR SUTOKU

SUTOKU IN

Jens Klimek

♩ = 54

SOPRANO *p* (oo) _____

ALTO *p* (oo) _____

TENOR *p* (oo) _____

BASS *mp*

The rock The

5

rock di - vides, di - vides the stream in two, and both with

9

might and main Go tumb-ling down the

14

wa-ter - fall But well I know the

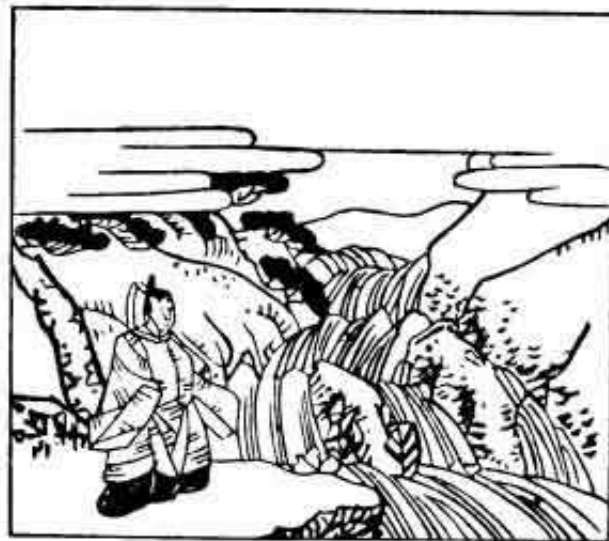
18

twain will soon u - nite a -

22

gain.

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time, starting at measure 22. It features a melody of quarter and eighth notes, ending with a long note. The second staff is the right-hand piano accompaniment, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes with slurs. The third staff is the left-hand piano accompaniment, featuring a bass line with quarter notes and slurs. The fourth staff is a bass line with long notes and slurs. The word 'gain.' is written below the first staff.



THE PRIEST DŌ-IN
DŌ-IN HOSHI

Jens Klimek

♩ = 40

SOLO VOICE

SOPRANO

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

p

b.c.

p

b.c.

p

b.c.

p

b.c.

9

mp

How sad, how sad and gloo-my is the world, this world of sin and

mp

How sad How sad and gloo-my is the

mp

How sad How sad and gloo - my is the

mp

How sad How sad and gloo - my is the

mp

How sad How sad and gloo-my is the

16

woe, Ah! while I drift a - long Life's stream,
 world, this world of sin and woe, while I drift a - long Life's
 world, this world of sin and woe, while I drift a - long Life's stream,
 world, this world of sin and woe, while I drift a - long Life's
 world, this world of sin and woe,

pp mp pp mp pp mp pp

22

Tossed help - less to and fro, my
 stream, Tossed help-less to and fro,
 Tossed help - less to and fro,
 stream, Tossed help - less to and fro,
 Tossed help - less to and fro

mf mf mf mf mf

28

tears will e - ver, e - ver, e - - - - ver

my tears will e - ver

my tears will e - - - - ver

my tears will e - ver

my tears will e - - - - ver

33

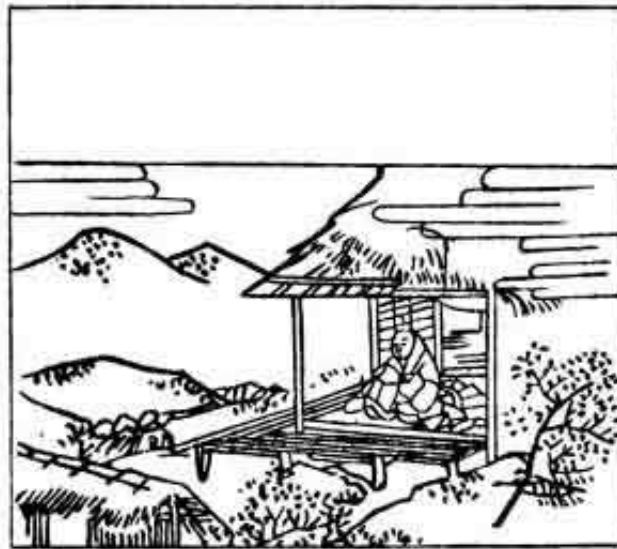
flow.

b.c.

b.c.

b.c.

b.c.



THE ASSISTANT IMPERIAL ADVISER MASAFUSA
GON CHŪ-NAGON MASAFUSA

Jens Klimek

♩ = 80

SOPRANO *p*
 The cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, — the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming,

ALTO *p*
 The cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, — the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, — the

TENOR

BASS

8

— the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, — the cher-ry trees are blos-so-ming, — the

cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, — the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, — the cher-ry trees are

mp The cher-ry trees — are blos-so - ming, —

p The cher - ry trees — are

15

cher-ry trees are blos-so-ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, are blos - so - ming,

22

blos - so - ming, the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, the the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, the cher - ry trees are The cher - ry trees, the cher - ry trees, the on Ta - ka - sa - go's height; on Ta - ka - sa - go's height;

27

cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, blos - so - ming, cher - ry trees, the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, the

32

the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, — the cher - ry trees are
 cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, — the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming,
 Oh, may no mist, — no
 Oh, may no moun - - - -

37

blos - so - ming, — the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, — the
 — the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, — the cher - ry trees are
 mist a - rise, — oh, may no moun-tain mist a - rise, —
 - tain mist a - rise, — no

42

cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming — the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming,
 the cher - ry trees are blos - so - ming, — the
 blos - so - ming, — the cher - ry trees, the cher - ry
 no
 mist a - rise, — no

47

the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming,
cher ry trees are blos so - ming,
trees, the cher - ry trees, - the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the
clouds so soft and white,

53

the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming,
cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the
the cher-ry trees are blos-so - - - ming,
the cher-ry trees are blos-so - - - ming,

59

the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming,
cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the
on Ta - ka - sa - go's height,
on Ta - ka - sa - go's height,

65

the cher-ry trees are blos so - ming, oh, may no moun-tain mist a - rise, no mist a -

73

rit. A tempo

the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, to hide them from our sight. rise, to hide them from our sight.

80

cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming. the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming, the cher-ry trees are blos-so - ming.



CHISATO ŌYE
ŌYE NO CHISATO

Jens Klimek

♩ = 50

pp *p* *f*

SOPRANO
This night, this night, this night the

pp *p* *f*

ALTO
This night, this night, this night the

pp *p* *f*

TENOR
This night, this night, this night the

pp *p* *f*

BASS
This night, this night, this night the

9 *p*

cheer - less au-tumn moon doth all my mind en - thrall;

p

cheer - less au-tumn moon doth all my mind en - thrall;

p

cheer - less au-tumn moon doth all my mind, my mind en - thrall;

p

cheer - less au-tumn moon doth all my mind en - thrall;

16

p But o-thers al - so have their griefs, for au-tumn on us all *mp*

p But o-thers al - so have their griefs, for au-tumn on us all *mp*

pp This night, this night, this

pp This night, this night, this

23

poco f for au-tumn on us all hath cast her gloo-my pall.

poco f for au-tumn on us all hath cast her gloo-my pall.

poco f night, this night,

poco f night, this night,

29

pp This night, this night, this night. *p* *mp* *pp*

pp This night, this night, this night. *p* *mp* *pp*

pp This night, this night, this night. *p* *mp* *pp*

pp This night, this night, this night. *p* *mp* *pp*

