CHAPTER SEVEN

[12]

Suma

[From the third month of Genji's twenty-sixth year until the third month of his twenty-seventh year. Fujitsubo lady: 31–32; Murasaki: 18–19; Rokujō lady: 33–34; Akashi lady: 17–18; Yūgiri, 5–6; crown prince: 8–9; Suzaku emperor: 29–30.

Four years have elapsed since the events described in "Aoi." The fates have not been kind to Genji: his father died three years ago, the minister of the left has withdrawn from court, the Fujitsubo lady has become a nun, the Rokujō lady has gone to Ise with her daughter, Asagao has left the capital to serve as Kamo Virgin, and Oborozukiyo has become a principal handmaid and imperial concubine. Worst of all, Oborozukiyo's father, the minister of the right, has discovered her and Genji in bed together, and her sister, the Kokiden lady, has made up her mind to drive Genji from the court. As we learn below, Genji has been stripped of his offices and faces the possibility of banishment on a trumped-up charge of treason.]

In miserable spirits as one disheartening event succeeded another, Genji came to feel that he would merely invite further misfortune by staying in the capital as though nothing were amiss. He thought about going to Suma but hesitated after someone told him, "People from the court did live there long ago, but it's terribly isolated and lonely now. Even a fisherman's house is a rarity." On the other hand, it would scarcely be desirable to live in retirement at a place where one would keep open house for throngs of visitors. Still, Suma was very distant; he would worry about things at home. It was embarrassingly difficult to sort out his thoughts and reach a decision.

All sorts of distressing things came to mind as he pondered every aspect of his situation, from the past to the future. Determined though he might be to leave the place he now found so distasteful, it was impossible to contemplate the move itself without realizing how many things he could not bear to part with. Above all, there was the wrenching pity whenever he looked at Murasaki, whose misery increased with every passing morning and evening. Even on occasions when it was possible to keep in mind the poet's words about following different ways to certain reunion, a mere

separation of a day or two was enough to worry him and depress her, but this was not to be an absence of a predetermined number of years; rather, his departure might well mark their last farewell in an uncertain world, even though he would set out with meeting her again as his final objective.[1] The thought was so painful that he sometimes toyed with the idea of quietly taking her along, but he always reconsidered. It would never do to carry off such a fragile, helpless creature to a cheerless shore where the winds and waves would be their only visitors; besides, having her there would make him worry more. Hurt, she tried to persuade him that she would be happy in the worst of places, if only he would agree not to leave her behind.

Naturally enough, the prospect of his departure caused great distress at the house of the scattering orange blossoms, for he was the sole stay of the lady's sad, pathetic life, even though he seldom visited her.[2] There were many others who grieved in private, women with whom he had once had casual liaisons. And from the Fujitsubo lady there came a stream of solicitous secret messages, sent in spite of her fears about gossip. If only she had been so warm, so sympathetic, in the old days, Genji thought, recalling the past. It was bitter to feel that their relationship had apparently been fated to produce nothing but misery.

He left the capital soon after the twentieth of the third month. There was no preliminary announcement; he simply set out in an unobtrusive manner, accompanied only by seven or eight faithful attendants. By way of farewell to certain ladies, he merely sent discreet private messages. (Some of the letters were long and deeply affecting, undoubtedly worth reading, but I was too upset to make the proper inquiries.)

Two or three days before his departure, he visited the mansion of the minister of the left under cover of darkness. It was sad, almost dreamlike, to witness his furtive arrival in a shabby wickerwork carriage, its curtains lowered to suggest that the occupant was a woman. Aoi's old apartments seemed lonely and desolate. Upon learning of his rare visit, the boy's nurse, the pages, and Aoi's remaining attendants all assembled; and even the feckless younger ladies wept to see him, abruptly and poignantly aware of the ephemerality of worldly things.

1. To heighten the emotional intensity of Genji's soliloquy, Murasaki Shikibu uses phrases from two old poems. Ki no Tomonori (KKS 405): shita no obi no / michi wa katagata / wakaru tomo / yukimegurite mo / awamu to zo omou ("Although we part now, following our different ways, we will meet again, like an underbelt's two ends circling to come together"). Ōshikōchi no Mitsune (KKS 611): wa ga koi wa / yukue mo shirazu / hate mo nashi / au o kagiri to / omou bakari zo ("I cannot be sure where this love of mine may lead, or how it may end. I know only that meeting is my final objective").

2. This minor character, introduced in the chapter immediately preceding "Suma" (not translated) and usually called Hanachirusato ("[the lady from] the house of the scattering [orange] blossoms"), lives with her sister, one of the late emperor's lesser consorts. Both women depend on Genji for economic assistance.

The little boy came romping up, a captivating child. "I'm touched to see that he hasn't forgotten me after all this time," Genji said. He took him on his knee, looking as though the parting might be too much.

The minister came to greet him from another part of the mansion. "I've gathered that you've been home with time on your hands, and wanted to call for a chat about old times, but since I've pleaded illness as grounds for ceasing to perform my duties and resigning my rank, I felt that the gossips would sneer, 'He doesn't seem to have any trouble getting around on private business.' I ought not to have to worry about public opinion anymore, but people are merciless nowadays; it's frightful. And when I see what's happening to you, it seems that this must be an era of degeneracy, a time when longevity becomes a curse. Life isn't worth living when I see you in circumstances I could never have imagined, not if the world had turned upside down." He broke down in tears.

Genji's reply was lengthy. "They say everything is the result of a cause from a previous existence, so this is simply my bad karma. I've heard that in all civilized countries, people consider it a grave transgression for anyone under official censure to go on with his life as usual, even a minor offender who hasn't been stripped of rank and offices as I have; and in my particular case, it seems, the crime would be so heinous that the penalty could be distant-banishment. I can't run the risk of acting unconcerned just because my conscience is clear; I've decided to get away from the city before I suffer a worse humiliation," he said.

The minister began to speak of the old days, and of the late emperor and his aspirations for Genji. He found it impossible to keep his sleeve from his eyes, and Genji's efforts to maintain his own composure also failed. The innocent little boy ran around, claiming the attention of first one and then the other in a manner that seemed infinitely pathetic to both.

"I never forget the one who has left us, never cease to grieve, even for an instant," the minister said. "But now that this is happening to you, I take comfort in the thought that she escaped a nightmare by dying young. If she were alive, her anguish would be unbearable. What's sadder than anything is that the child will have to stay on here indefinitely in the company of two old people, without the experience of being close to his father. It never used to be that a man would have to face this kind of punishment, even when he was guilty of a genuine offense. True, lots of ill-fated innocent people like you have suffered, even in China, but it's always been because there were specific charges against them. I just don't understand it." He ran on in the same vein.

Tō-no-chūjō arrived, and the hour grew late as they drank. Genji decided to spend the night. He summoned Aoi's attendants for conversation and observed with silent compassion the misery to which his secret favorite, Lady Chūnagon, could not give voice. He made it a point to engage her in intimate talk after the others had fallen asleep. (It was probably because of her that he stayed.)

When dawn approached, he prepared to set out in the dark, under a delightful late moon. A thin mist hovered over the garden, which looked very white with so little shade from the cherry trees now that the blossoms had gradually passed their prime; and the hazy, indistinct scene was far more moving than if the season had been autumn. He looked out for a while, leaning against the balustrade at the corner of the building. Lady Chūnagon opened the door and waited as if to see him off.

"I'm afraid we won't be able to see each other again. It never occurred to me that anything like this might happen; I didn't feel a need to rush things in the days when meeting would have been easy," he said. She wept in silence.

Lady Saishō, the boy's nurse, brought a message from Princess Ōmiya. "I wanted to speak to you myself, but I was so upset that I hesitated, and now they say you're leaving while it's still pitch black—such a change from the old days, I can't help thinking. It would be nice if you could wait until our little sleepyhead wakes up."

With tears in his eyes, Genji murmured a poem as though it were not intended to be an answer.

toribeyama
moeshi keburi mo
magau ya to
ama no shio yaku
ura mi ni zo yuku

Will the smoke resemble
the plume from the pyre that burned
at Mount Toribe?
I go to view the shore
where seafolk tend their salt fires.

"I wonder if partings at dawn are always this painful. You probably know about such things," he said.

The nurse seemed deeply affected. "They say the word 'parting' is unpleasant at any time, but I don't think it could ever be as sad as it is this morning," she said in a tearful voice.

To the princess, Genji replied, "There are innumerable things I want to say to you, but . . . Please try to imagine the state of my emotions. I would never be able to leave this hateful city if I were to look at the boy; I must pluck up my courage and hurry off."

The ladies-in-waiting peeped out to watch him go. Elegant, handsome, and melancholy, his appearance in the brilliant light of the sinking moon was enough to bring tears to the eyes of tigers and wolves. And for these women who had served him since his boyhood, his incomparable beauty seemed too sad to bear.

I almost forgot the princess's answer:

naki hito no
wakare ya itodo
hedataranu
keburi to narishi
kumoi narade wa

If you do not stay
beneath the heavens where she
ascended as smoke,
you will be farther still
from the one who is no more.

Confronted by this new grief while they were still mourning the loss of their mistress, the women felt as though there were no end to their sorrows, and they all wept over his departure in a manner that verged on the inauspicious.

Back at the Nijō Mansion, Genji found his ladies-in-waiting assembled in separate clusters. They had apparently stayed up all night, appalled by the things that were happening. There was nobody in the waiting room used by his male attendants. The men closest to him had probably gone off to say their private goodbyes, resolved to share his journey; and the others feared that a farewell call might be enough to expose them to censure and persecution. The quiet, deserted street, which had once barely accommodated the crush of visitors' horses and carriages, brought home the realization of what a cruel place the world could be. There was dust on some of the individual dining tables, and a number of seating mats had been put into storage. If things looked this way while he was still here to see, he could imagine the process of decline that would follow.

He crossed to the west wing, setting off a flurry of activity among the small page girls who had been lying about on the veranda, more than half asleep, while Murasaki sat in pensive thought, her shutters still unlowered. The children were a delightful sight in their nightdresses, and he reflected gloomily that they would probably disperse in time, unable to face the long wait until his return. It was a concern that would not ordinarily have given him pause.

"It got late last night, what with one thing and another, so I slept at the minister's house. You probably thought I was doing something distasteful again. I want to be with you every instant while I'm still in the city, but there are many things on my mind, of course, and I haven't been able to stay home all the time. Life is so uncertain; it would be sad to hurt people by letting them think I didn't care about them," he said.

She said only in reply, "No 'distasteful thing' could possibly be worse than what's happening now." It was natural that she should feel Genji's departure more than others, for it was he with whom she had felt at home since childhood. Her father, the prince, had always been a remote figure, and now, unwilling to risk gossip, he was holding himself more aloof than ever, neither writing to her nor even calling to ask how Genji was faring. Embarrassed to have her ladies know of his neglect, she wished he had never found out where she was. She had learned through certain channels that her stepmother had said, "Her sudden prosperity didn't last long, did it? What a karma! One way or another, she loses everybody who cares about her." And since then she had broken off all communication, deeply wounded. With nobody but Genji to turn to, she was in a pathetic situation.

"If I should have to stay there indefinitely without a pardon, I'll send for you, even if the place is only a cave in the rocks, but it wouldn't do for

people to hear that I was taking you with me now.[3] They say it's a major offense for anyone under official displeasure to lead a normal life, or even to go outside and look at the sun and moon. I believe it must be my karma to suffer unmerited hardships; the blind irrationality at court makes me feel that my troubles would only increase if I ignored the precedents and took along someone I loved," Genji explained. He stayed in bed until the sun was high.

Prince Sochi and Tō-no-chūjō arrived, and he put on an informal cloak to receive them.[4] The garment was made of unfigured silk, appropriate for someone without rank or office, but its very plainness created an effect of elegant simplicity. He moved closer to the mirror-stand to comb his hair. Even to his own gaze, his thin face looked refined and handsome. "I didn't realize I'd lost so much weight. It shows in this mirror. What a sad business it's been!" he said. Murasaki watched him with steadfast, tearful eyes, an unbearably pathetic figure. [Genji:]

mi wa kakute
sasuraenu tomo
kimi ga atari
saranu kagami no
kage wa hanareji

Although my body
may wander off like this,
my reflection
will never leave the mirror
that remains by your side.

Murasaki replied as though talking to herself:

wakarete mo
kage dani tomaru
mono naraba
kagami o mite mo
nagusametemashi

Were your reflection
something that might stay behind
after you had gone,
then it would be comforting
to look into this mirror.

She seated herself beside a pillar to hide her tears, and Genji's gaze lingered involuntarily on her figure. To see her was to realize that none of his other ladies could compare with her.

Prince Sochi stayed, conversing quietly, until the day ended.

Naturally, Genji had been receiving frequent communications from the dismayed residents of the house of the scattering blossoms.[5] Afraid that the consort's sister would take it amiss if he failed to pay her a visit, he decided to go out again that night. He went with reluctance, and it was very late when he arrived.

"That you should deign to honor us with this visit, just as though we

3. Anonymous (KKS 952): ika naramu / iwao no naka ni / sumaba ka wa / yo no ukikoto no / kikoekozaramu ("Within what manner of cavern, bounded by rocks, might one seek shelter to divorce oneself from news of the sorrows of the world?").

4. Prince Sochi, Genji's half-brother, is better known as Prince Hotaru ("the Firefly Prince"), from an incident later in the story.

5. Probably in connection with their material needs.

were people of consequence!" The consort expressed her appreciation in language it would be tedious to report in full. He could not help imagining the bleak future confronting this household, which for so long had barely survived through his assistance. The building was hushed, and the sight of the wide pond and the densely wooded hill, lonely and cheerless in the misty moonlight, brought to mind the "cave in the rocks" where he might dwell.

The consort's sister in the western apartment had been sunk in gloom, not daring to hope that Genji would take the trouble to visit her, but he came along in the soft, quiet light of the sad moon and slipped inside, his motions releasing an incomparable fragrance. She moved forward on her knees to greet him and sat gazing at the moon. They began to talk, and presently it was almost dawn again.

"The nights are so short now," Genji said. "To think that even another meeting like this will probably be impossible . . . If only I had used my time better! I see now that I've always been too worried about the gossip someone in my position attracts." There were repeated cockcrows as he reminisced, and he prepared to hurry off so as not to be noticed. As usual, she could not put away the sad feeling that he was vanishing along with the setting moon. The moonlight on the wet sleeve of her purple robe recalled the old poem about tears on the face of the moon, and she recited:[6]

tsukikage no
yadoreru sode wa
sebaku tomo
tomete mo mibaya
akanu hikari o

Narrow though they be—
these sleeves that give lodging
to the rays of the moon—
how I long to detain
the light of which I never tire!

Moved by her distress, he tried to comfort her despite his own unhappiness:

yukimeguri
tsui ni sumubeki
tsukikage no
shibashi kumoramu
sora na nagame so

Do not gaze at the sky
where clouds may briefly obscure
the light of the moon—
the orb that will make its rounds
and shine bright again at last.

"But when you get down to it," he said, "my return does look uncertain. One's eyes are simply blinded with the tears that come from not knowing what lies ahead."[7] He left in the gray light of dawn.

He saw to everything that needed attention, parceling out degrees of responsibility at the Nijō Mansion among those of his intimate attendants

6. Ise (KKS 756): ai ni aite / mono omou koro no / wa ga sode ni / yadoru tsuki sae / nururu kao naru ("How fitting it seems that tears should dampen the face even of the moon, whose image visits my sleeve as I sit lost in sad thought").

7. Minamoto no Wataru (GSS 1333): yukusaki o / shiranu namida no / kanashiki wa / tada me no mae ni / otsuru narikeri ("These tears that fall, plain for all to behold, will serve as witness to the sorrow of one who knows not what lies ahead").

who had refused to truckle to the ruling clique, and selecting all the men who were to accompany him on the journey. As furnishings for his rustic dwelling, he chose to take only certain essentials, all of the plainest, most unadorned sort, a box containing the collected poems of Bo Juyi and other necessary books, and a single seven-stringed koto. There were to be no ostentatious articles of furniture, no magnificent robes; his guise would be that of a humble mountain peasant. Murasaki was to take charge of his ladies-in-waiting and everything else that might come up. He gave her the deeds to his estates, pasturages, and other properties. To help her administer these and lesser resources—storehouses, treasures, and so forth—with the assistance of his trusted stewards, he explained the necessary procedures to her nurse, Shōnagon, whose abilities he held in high regard.

For Nakatsukasa, Chūjō, and others of his favored ladies-in-waiting, having him in the house had served as consolation for his neglect. Now they felt deprived of all comfort, but he gave them mementos appropriate to their status and sent them off to the west wing, high and low alike. "It may be that I will survive long enough to return. Anyone who wants to wait for me should please serve Her Ladyship," he said. Needless to say, he also sent tasteful farewell presents to the boy's nurses and the people at the house of the scattering blossoms—nor did he forget to add practical gifts.

He took the risk of sending Oborozukiyo a letter. "I know it's only natural that you haven't written . . . Facing up to leaving everything is the saddest and most painful experience of my life."

ōse naki
namida no kawa ni
shizumishi ya
nagaruru mio no
hajime nariken

Unable to see you,
I sank beneath the flowing
river of my tears.
Might that have been the origin
of the tide that bears me off?

"That unforgettable love is the only crime to which I must plead guilty." He wrote little, apprehensive lest the letter fall into unfriendly hands before it could be delivered.

The lady tried to hide her anguish, but there was nothing she could do about the tears that overflowed her sleeve. [Her poem:]

namidagawa
ukabu minawa mo
kienubeshi
nagarete nochi no
se o mo matazute

The bubble afloat
on a river of tears
is doomed to vanish.
It cannot await reunion
with the one who drifts away.

Set down in a hand that hinted at the writer's tearful, distraught state, the calligraphy was delightful. Genji felt that it would be a pity to leave without seeing her one last time, but on second thought he decided not to press the point, mindful of his numerous enemies among her relatives, and of her own terror of discovery.

He was to set out in the morning. Toward nightfall, he left the mansion with the intention of paying his respects at his father's grave in the northern hills. At that time of month, the moon would not rise until almost dawn, so he went to call on the Fujitsubo lady first. Someone placed a cushion for him just outside the blinds, and she talked to him without an intermediary, the crown prince's future much on her mind. Both were people of rare sensibility, and their conversation must have called forth deep emotion.

The change to the religious life had not diminished the lady's old sweetness and charm. Genji felt tempted to hint at the pain her coldness had caused, but he knew she would consider it improper for him to talk that way to a nun; also, to do so would add to his own distress. He allowed himself only a brief remark, one that sounded reasonable in the circumstances.

"I can think of but one explanation for these astonishing charges—one that makes me fear the judgment of heaven. Life is unimportant to me; I wouldn't mind dying if I could be sure the boy would have a safe reign," he said. Perfectly aware of his meaning, she was too agitated to respond. He sat weeping over the memories that crowded into his mind, an indescribably refined and elegant figure.

"I'm going to visit Father's grave," he said. "Do you have a message for him?" She struggled with her emotions, slow to reply. At length:

mishi wa naku
aru wa kanashiki
yo no hate o
somukishi kai mo
nakunaku zo furu

Weeping, I go on,
nothing gained from renouncing
the sad, fading world,
where he whom I knew has died
and he who lives meets with grief.

They were both too distraught to express all of their thoughts in verse. Genji replied:

wakareshi ni
kanashiki koto wa
tsukinishi o
mata zo kono yo no
usa wa masareru

I drained the dregs of grief
in parting with my father,
but now I discover
in this present existence
a source of greater sorrow.[8]

He left when the moon rose. He rode on horseback, accompanied by only five or six close attendants and some trusted servants. Needless to say, there was little resemblance to the way in which he had once traveled. The whole party was in wretched spirits. One of them was the chamberlain-lieutenant who had served as his special escort on the day of the purification.[9] After

8. *Kono yo*, "this present existence," is homophonous with a phrase that can mean, "my child's situation."

9. That is, for the Kamo Virgin's purification ceremony four years before, as described at the beginning of "Aoi."

waiting in vain for a promotion he had had every right to expect, he had finally lost both his entrée into the courtiers' hall and his offices, and he was now leaving with Genji because he felt too embarrassed to show his face at court. Reminded of the past by the sight of the lower Kamo Shrine, which was visible in the distance, he dismounted, grasped the bit of Genji's horse and recited a poem:

hikitsurete
aoi kazashishi
sono kami o
omoeba tsurashi
kamo no mizugaki

Recalling the day
when I decked my hat with heartvine
as your attendant,
I resent the unkindness
of the Kamo divinities.

Genji pitied him. How must he feel to have come to this, after outshining all his peers? He dismounted also, bowed toward the shrine, and asked leave of the gods to depart:

ukiyo o ba
ima zo wakaruru
todomaramu
na o ba tadasu no
kami ni makasete

Now I bid farewell
to this wearisome life.
If there is talk of me,
I trust you to show the truth,
deities of Tadasu.[10]

To the lieutenant, who was an impressionable youth, he seemed a moving and splendid figure.

When Genji arrived at the grave, the memory of his father was so vivid that he seemed to see him before his eyes, looking just as he had looked during his lifetime. It was painful to realize that communication with the dead is impossible, even in the case of an emperor. No matter what tearful tale he might unfold, there was no hope of a discernible response, no point in asking what had become of all those anxious dying instructions to the present ruler.[11]

Dew from the rank vegetation on the path had drenched his robes, which were already damp with tears. The moon had disappeared behind some clouds, and the dense woods were shrouded in eerie darkness. Not at all sure that he would be able to find his way out again, he performed his obeisance, and as he did so, his father's face rose before him with uncanny clarity. [Genji:]

nakikage ya
ikaga miruramu
yosoetsutsu
nagamuru tsuki mo
kumogakurenuru

When he sees me thus,
what is his spirit thinking?
Clouds darken the moon,
the orb at which I gaze,
likening it to his face.

10. Tadasu, the name of a wooded area where the Kamo Shrine was situated, can be taken to mean "investigate and determine the truth."

11. Genji's father had told the new emperor to make Genji his principal adviser.

Upon returning home after sunrise, he decided to send the crown prince a message. He addressed the letter to Ō-no-myōbu, who was acting as a surrogate mother for the boy, and attached it to a cherry branch from which all the blossoms had scattered. "At long last, I intend to leave the capital today. The greatest of my many sorrows is that I have been unable to visit you. Please imagine my feelings and convey them to the prince." [His poem:]

itsu ka mata
haru no miyako no
hana o mimu
toki ushinaeru
yamagatsu ni shite

When will he see again
the cherry blossoms of spring
in the capital—
the mountain-dwelling peasant
shunted aside by the times?

Ō-no-myōbu showed the letter to the prince, and he looked at it with sober attention, young though he was. "How shall I reply?" she asked. "Say, 'I miss you even when I don't see you for a little while. What will it be like when you're far away?'" he told her. It seemed a pathetically childish answer. She could not help remembering everything—the days when Genji was consumed by a hopeless passion, the times when he and her mistress had actually met. Both of them should have enjoyed happier lives, but he had deliberately chosen a darker path—and for that, she felt, she herself was solely to blame. Her answer was somewhat disjointed, probably because she was in a state of extreme agitation. "I can find no words. I gave His Highness your message. It was very sad to witness his grief."

sakite toku
chiru wa ukeredo
yuku haru wa
hana no miyako o
tachikaerimi yo

It is painful
that blossoms must scatter so soon,
but please view them next year,
when the spring that now departs
shall have returned to the city.

"Once the time comes . . ."

Afterward, the ladies-in-waiting fell into melancholy conversation, and furtive tears were shed throughout the prince's palace.

Every one of the crown prince's attendants had grieved to see Genji brought low, even those who had merely caught glimpses of him. The people in service at the Nijō Mansion were, of course, far more deeply affected. Favored with the rarest of generosity, which extended all the way down to maids and chamber-pot cleaners, menials of whose existence Genji could scarcely have been aware, they were dismayed by the prospect of any absence on the part of their master, no matter how brief. And in society as a whole, not a soul shrugged off his departure as a matter of indifference. There was nobody who had not depended on his good offices or profited from his kindness, for he had been with his father day and night since the

age of seven, and none of his requests had ever been denied. Many senior nobles, controllers, and other powerful figures owed him debts of gratitude, and the numbers of his lesser beneficiaries were beyond calculation. Such men were not unaware of their obligations, but all of them avoided the Nijō Mansion, intimidated by the punitive atmosphere at court. They may have felt that they could do nothing for Genji by visiting him at the sacrifice of their own careers, even though they felt deep distress at his departure and inwardly criticized and resented the court's behavior. In many cases, their aloofness verged on the indecent, and Genji was constantly made to feel that the world was a dreary place.

He set out late at night in the usual manner, after a day spent in quiet conversation with Murasaki. His hunting robe and other travel accouterments were all very plain. "The moon has risen all the way," he said. "Won't you come out a little way to see me off? I know I'm going to think of all sorts of things I needed to tell you. It's strange how depressed I feel whenever we're apart, even if it's only for a day or two." He rolled up a blind and coaxed her toward the veranda. Trying to control her tears, she crept forward hesitantly, very lovely in the moonlight. He worried about how she would get along once he had severed his ties with the fickle world, but to speak of such things would only add to her distress. Instead, he tried to make light of the situation:

ikeru yo no
wakare o shirade
chigiritsutsu
inochi o hito ni
kagirikeru ka na

I swore to be true
until the day of my death,
not realizing
that separations may occur
while people are still alive.

"It was foolish to think there wouldn't be times when we'd be apart." She replied:

oshikaranu
inochi ni kaete
me no mae no
wakare o shibashi
todome te shi ga na

If only I might
win a brief postponement
of today's parting
in exchange for the life
I would gladly sacrifice!

He felt certain that those were her true feelings. It was hard to leave, but he hurried away, conscious of how awkward it might be if dawn overtook him.

Murasaki's image never left him as he journeyed, and it was with a heavy heart that he boarded the boat.

Thanks to the long days at that time of year, and to the help of a following wind, he arrived at Suma in daylight, before the hour of the monkey [3:00 P.M.–5:00 P.M.]. None of his short excursions had served as preparation for such a trip, and he felt that he had now experienced both the

trials and the pleasures of travel for the first time. The Ōe Lodge was in ruins, distinguishable only by its pine trees.[12] [His poem:]

karakuni ni
na o nokoshikeru
hito yori mo
yukue shirarenu
iei o ya semu

Shall I perhaps lodge
in dwellings more uncertain
than those of the one
who has left behind a name
in the land beyond the sea?[13]

Watching the waves advance toward the shore and then retreat, he murmured, "With envious eyes . . ."[14] The quotation was a familiar one, but his unhappy attendants felt as though they were hearing it for the first time.

When he looked behind him and saw haze dimming the mountains he had passed, he could not restrain the tears that fell like spray from the boatman's oar; he seemed indeed "three thousand leagues from home."[15] [His poem:]

furusato o
mine no kasumi wa
hedatsuredo
nagamuru sora wa
onaji kumoi ka

The haze on the peaks
screens off the royal city.
Might it be, at least,
that this sky I gaze upon
is the very one they see?

No aspect of the journey but gave rise to pain.

The place where he was to live was close to the site of the dwelling where Middle Counselor Yukihira had "wept as salt seaweed dripped."[16] It was in the hills just behind the coast, a site forbidding in its loneliness. Everything about it struck him as remarkable, even the fences. There were thatched buildings and other thatched structures that looked like corridors, the whole done in excellent taste. It was all very novel, perfectly suited to the situation. Remembering some of his old romantic adventures, he knew it would have delighted him if the circumstances had been different. He summoned officials from his manors nearby, and Yoshikiyo, serving as his steward, issued

12. The lodge is said to have stood on the bank of the Yodo River at Ōe (now a part of Ōsaka) and to have been used by Ise Virgins returning to the capital.

13. Thought to be a reference to the Chinese poet Qu Yuan (340 B.C.–278 B.C.) and his wanderings in exile.

14. Genji quotes a poem attributed to a courtier traveling eastward from the capital in self-imposed exile. Anonymous (IM, sec. 7): itodoshiku / sugiyuku kata no / koishiki ni / urayamashiku mo / kaeru nami ka na ("With envious eyes, I watch the returning waves—now, more than ever, borne down with nostalgia for all that lies behind me").

15. A hyperbolic expression, derived from a poem by Bo Juyi in which the speaker is a lonely traveler.

16. Ariwara no Yukihira (KKS 962): wakuraba ni / tou hito araba / suma no ura ni / moshio taretsutsu / wabu to kotae yo ("If, by any chance, someone should ask after me, answer that I pine, weeping as salt seaweed drips on the beaches of Suma"). Yukihira, a prominent 9th-century courtier and poet, was forced into temporary self-exile at Suma for a reason that is no longer known.

orders and supervised the execution of necessary tasks, a role pathetically different from the one he had enacted in the capital.

Before long, Genji had succeeded in creating very attractive surroundings for himself. He had made a deep garden stream and done some planting, and now, as though in a dream, he found himself quite reconciled to the idea of living there.

The governor of the province, who was one of his protégés, showed his sympathy by performing discreet services on his behalf.

With so many people going in and out, it was hard to believe that this was only a travel dwelling, but there was nobody with whom to converse on equal terms, and Genji felt very much a stranger in a strange land. He wondered gloomily how he would manage to get through the months and years.

As things gradually settled down and the rainy season began, his thoughts turned to the capital, and to the many people he missed, especially Murasaki, whose grieving figure haunted his memory; also the crown prince, and the little son who had run from one person to another in innocent play. He decided to send a messenger to the city. When he tried to write to Murasaki and the Fujitsubo lady, blinding tears forced him to break off. To the Fujitsubo lady he sent a poem and a note:

matsushima no
ama no tomaya mo
ika naramu
suma no urabito
shio taruru koro

In this season
when the shore-dweller at Suma
weeps as saltweed drips,
how is it in the fisher's
thatched hut at Matsushima?[17]

"I have felt unhappy all along, but now the past and the future seem equally dark; the river threatens to overflow its banks."[18]

As usual, his message to Oborozukiyo took the form of a private communication to her attendant Chūnagon. In an enclosure, he wrote, "I have little to occupy me, and memories of the past keep coming into my mind." [His poem:]

korizuma no
ura no mirume mo
yukashiki o
shio yaku ama ya
ikaga omowan

Unrepentant, I yearn
for the *mirume* seaweed
on Suma strand—
but how feels the fishermaid
tending the salt-burning fire?

You can probably imagine the detailed letters he addressed to other quarters. One message went to Aoi's father, and there was another instructing the nurse Saishō to take good care of the boy.

17. Puns yield another meaning: "In this season when my tears fall like rain, what are the thoughts of the nun who awaits my return?"

18. Ki no Tsurayuki (KKRJ 2345): kimi oshimu / namida ochisoi / kono kawa no / migiwa masarite / nagarubera nari ("When the tears I shed, loath to bid you farewell, fall into its waters, this river will be certain to overflow its banks").

Many people in the capital suffered great anguish as they read these messages. To the dismay of Murasaki's women, who tried in vain to comfort her, she lay prostrate with the letter in her hand, wracked by passionate longing. She grieved for him as though for the dead, treasuring his personal belongings, the koto on which he had strummed a few notes, the scent from a discarded robe, and other such things. Her behavior seemed positively inauspicious; Shōnagon asked the bishop to offer prayers. The bishop performed esoteric rites for both Genji and Murasaki. Moved to compassion, he prayed that she might find surcease from her grief, and that he might return and be as he had been.

Murasaki prepared bedclothes and other necessities to send to the country. Saddened by the sight of informal cloaks and bloused trousers made of plain white taffeta, all so different from his usual attire, she remembered his poem about the mirror. The promised reflection appeared in her mind's eye, but it afforded small comfort. She choked up whenever she looked at an entrance he had used or a pillar he had leaned against. When we consider that such a parting would have saddened anyone, even a woman of mature years, profound discernment, and much experience in the ways of the world, her desperate longing seems only natural, for she had been torn apart from the one person with whom she was most comfortable, the one person who had cherished and reared her in the place of a father and mother. Nothing could have been done about it if he had died; she would probably have begun to forget as time went on. But she never ceased to agonize over the impossibility of telling how long this parting might last, even though he was apparently not very far away.

I need not say that Genji's departure had also come as a great blow to the Fujitsubo lady, who had relied on his support for the crown prince. In any case, she could not have shrugged off the misfortune of someone to whom her own karma was linked by such close bonds. Worried about gossip in past years, she had held her feelings in check and cultivated a pose of indifference to his love, telling herself that there might be criticism if she seemed at all sympathetic, but she could not help remembering with nostalgia that his firm control of his tumultuous emotions, and his skill at concealment, had kept their relationship safe to the end from the tongues of the capital. Her reply was warmer than usual:

shio taruru
koto o yaku nite
matsushima ni
toshi furu ama mo
nageki o zo tsumu

She amasses stores
of firewood—the fisher who dwells
at Matsushima
year after year, her sole concern
the burning of seaweed for salt.

"Still more now . . ."[19]

19. "Your plight deepens the sorrow of the nun whose sole occupation is weeping for the dead."

Oborozukiyo sent a brief message, which was enclosed in Lady Chūnagon's reply:

ura ni taku
amata ni tsutsumu
koi nareba
kuyuru keburi yo
yuku kata zo naki

Because this passion
must be concealed from many eyes,
there is no escape
for the smoldering smoke
from the fire in my breast.

"So much goes without saying. I simply can't . . ."

Chūnagon wrote a full account of her mistress's unhappiness. She included many pathetic details, and Genji's heart ached for the girl.

Murasaki's letter, a response to his own loving message, contained much to stir his emotions. She had included this poem:

urabito no
shio kumu sode ni
kurabemi yo
namiji hedatsuru
yoru no koromo o

Compare it to the sleeve
of the dweller by the shore
dipping salt water—
the robe worn at night by one
beyond the waves of the sea.

The bedclothes she sent were beautifully dyed and tailored. She did everything so very well. How ideal it would be to live here quietly with her, free of other demands on his time and energy—and how frustrating to be denied that pleasure! Her face stayed with him day and night, a source of unbearable memories. Should he not, after all, bring her to Suma in secret? But no. In this world of sorrows, he must at least try to atone for his sins. He restricted himself to vegetarian fare and read the scriptures all day long.

It was also saddening to receive news of Yūgiri from Aoi's parents. Genji told himself that he and the boy would meet again, and that there could be no cause for anxiety while he was in such reliable hands, but no parent can keep from worrying about a child.

With all that was going on, I forgot to mention that Genji had written to the Rokujō lady at Ise. There now arrived a letter from her, sent by a messenger who had had to search to find him. It was full of tender sentiments, and the peerless elegance of its verse and calligraphy served as a reminder of her erudition and taste. "I have felt lost in an endless night since hearing of your move to that unbelievable place. I imagine you will return to the capital soon, but it will probably be a long time before I see you, sinner that I am."[20]

ukime karu
ise o no ama o
omoiyare

O dweller at Suma,
the shore where saltweed drips,
please sympathize

20. She will presumably stay at Ise until a new emperor selects a replacement for her daughter. Proscriptions against Buddhism were observed at the shrine; hence she is a sinner in the eyes of Buddhists.

moshio taru chō
suma no ura nite

with the fisher of Ise
who reaps the floating wrack.[21]

"Everything seems so dreadful! How will it all end?" It was a long letter. [Her second poem:]

iseshima ya
shiohi no kata ni
asarite mo
iu kai naki wa
wa ga mi narikeri

That I should live on
seems as pointless as to comb
the Ise beaches
at low tide, seeking shellfish
where none such can be found.

Overcome by painful emotions, she had more than once laid her brush aside and taken it up again, until she had filled four or five pages of white Chinese paper with characters in beautiful shades of black and gray. Genji pitied her. His own conduct seemed inexcusable. It was his mistake—his letting one incident transform his old affection into repugnance—that had driven her to her desperate act of renunciation. The timing of the letter strengthened its effect. Even the messenger seemed like a special friend, and Genji detained him for two or three days in order to hear his tales of Ise. The fellow was young and handsome, one of the Virgin's attendants. In Genji's straitened circumstances, even someone of negligible status naturally came close enough to catch a glimpse of him, and tears rose in the youth's eyes as he beheld his splendid figure.

You may imagine the language in which Genji answered the lady's letter. He wrote in part, "If I had known I would have to leave the city, I'd have followed you to Ise. It's boring and depressing here."

isebito no
nami no ue kogu
obune ni mo
ukime wa karade
noramashi mono o

Instead of reaping
floating wrack, I might have ridden
in a small boat
rowed out over the waves
by a dweller at Ise.[22]

ama ga tsumu
nageki no naka ni
shio tarete
itsu made suma no
ura ni nagamemu

How long must I live
gazing into the distance
at Suma shore,
shedding briny tears where seafolk
pile wood to burn their saltweed?

"It's dreadfully distressing not to know when I can see you again."

He kept in touch with all his ladies in this manner.

There were sad replies from the sisters at the house of the scattering blossoms. It was a novel experience to read their elegant epistles in his present surroundings, and he read and reread them with mingled pleasure and gloom. The younger sister had sent this poem:

21. "You who weep like Yukihira at Suma: sympathize with someone who lives in misery at Ise."

22. Genji alludes to a *fuzokuuta* (folksong) popular at court (KDKYS, p. 441): "A dweller at Ise is a very queer person. Why is that, you ask? Because he gets into a small boat and rows out over the waves! And rows out over the waves!"

aremasaru
noki no shinobu o
nagametsutsu
shigeku mo tsuyu no
kakaru sode ka na

As the long rains fall,
dewdrops cluster on the sleeve
of one sick at heart
who gazes at the creeping moss-fern
on the moldering eaves.

Yes, he thought, there was nobody but the weeds and wild vines to look after them now. Upon learning that the rains had collapsed the tile-capped earthen walls of their house in several places, he sent orders to his steward in the capital to muster repair crews from his estates in neighboring provinces.

Conscious that people were laughing at her, Oborozukiyo had sunk into a deep depression, and her doting father, the minister, kept after the emperor and the Kokiden lady to do something about it. The emperor decided that he should reconsider. She was an official at court, not a recognized imperial consort whose conduct was governed by strict rules; and furthermore, it was solely because of the unfortunate incident with Genji that she had been punished. He decreed that she should be pardoned and allowed to return to court. But there was no room in her heart for anybody but Genji.

She returned to court during the seventh month. The emperor, who still loved her dearly, kept her at his side as before, ignoring the gossips, and alternating tender reproaches with vows of eternal fidelity. He was a splendid-looking man, handsome in face and figure, but memories of Genji haunted her mind in a most disrespectful fashion. One time, while they were enjoying a little music, he said, "I miss Genji, and I can imagine that there must be many others who find his absence still more painful. I'm always feeling as though a light has gone out." He went on, "I ignored Father's last wishes, which is bound to count as a sin." He choked with tears, and Oborozukiyo also wept.

"I have learned from experience that life is no fun, and I feel sure I won't be around much longer. I hate to think my death will mean less to you than your separation from someone who isn't so very far away. He wasn't much of a lover, the poet who said, '. . . while I am still alive.'"[23] He spoke with gentle sincerity. Observing that her cheeks were wet with tears, he said, "Ah, you're crying! For whom, I wonder?"

"I'm sorry you haven't given me children. I'd like to adopt the crown prince as Father asked me to, but I fear it would cause problems," he said.

23. Said to be an allusion to a poem by Ōtomo no Momoyo (SIS 685): koishinamu / nochi wa nani sen / ikeru hi no / tame koso hito no / mimaku hoshikere ("What would be left after I had perished, unhappy in love? My goal is to be with her while I am still alive"). A proper lover hoped to continue the relationship in another life.

Certain people were conducting public affairs in a manner not to his liking, and there was much to distress a sovereign who was too young and weak to impose his will.

The winds of autumn, "the saddest season of all," blew at Suma.[24] The breakers of which Yukihira speaks, in his "blowing across the barrier,"[25] sounded very close at night, even though the sea was a fair distance away; and to Genji it seemed that nothing could be as evocative of melancholy musings as autumn in such a place. Awakening alone one night, after his few attendants were all asleep, he raised his head from the pillow and listened to the howling gale. The waves seemed about to invade the room, and he wept unawares until his pillow was in danger of floating away. When he essayed a few notes on the seven-stringed koto, the sound was lonesome and uncanny, even to his own ears. He broke off and intoned the words of a poem:

koiwabite
naku ne ni magau
uranami wa
omou kata yori
kaze ya fukuramu

That the breaking waves
harmonize with these sobs
wrung from a grieving heart—
is it because the wind blows
from where someone yearns for me?

His attendants awakened. Saddened by the beauty of his voice, they pulled themselves listlessly erect, trying not to show that they were blowing their noses. He could imagine their feelings, and his heart went out to them. It was for his sake alone that they had embraced this life of uncertainty, parting with their parents, their brothers and sisters, and the beloved homes from which any absence at all would have been hard to bear. How depressing it must be for them to see him moping like this!

During the days that followed, he enlivened his conversation with small jests, and put his leisure time to use by pasting together pieces of colored paper and writing out poems on them. He also amused himself by painting pictures on fine Chinese damask, producing folding screens splendid to behold. Now that he saw with his own eyes the ocean and mountains of which his attendants had once told him, and which he had hitherto merely pictured from afar, he recognized that this was indeed a coastline of matchless beauty, and he painted its many aspects with incomparable skill. It was a

24. Anonymous (KKS 184): ko no ma yori / morikuru tsuki no / kage mireba / kokorozukushi no / aki wa kinikeri ("To see moonlight come filtering through the branches is to awaken to the coming of autumn, the saddest season of all").

25. Ariwara no Yukihira (ShokuKKS 868): tabibito wa / sode suzushiku / narinikeri / seki fukikoyuru / suma no urakaze ("A wind on the beach at Suma, blowing across the barrier: a traveler remarks on the coolness of his sleeves"). Commentators have suggested that Murasaki Shikibu may actually have had in mind a poem by Mibu no Tadami (SKKS 1599): akikaze no / seki fukikoyuru / tabi goto ni / koe uchisouru / suma no uranami ("Each time the autumn wind blows across the barrier, the waves breaking on the seashore at Suma chorus in harmony"). Nothing is known about the barrier.

great pity, his men said to one another, that he could not summon the leading painters of the day, Chieda and Tsunenori, to add colors to his sketches. His friendliness and good cheer made them forget their troubles, and four or five of them were always in attendance, happy to associate with him on such intimate terms.

On a pleasant evening when the flowers in the garden were in profuse bloom, Genji strolled out to a corridor from which the sea was visible, and his almost uncanny beauty, strangely exotic in such surroundings, made him seem a visitor from another world as he lingered there. He was wearing a deep blue cloak, its ties casually loose, over robes of soft white damask and a pair of aster-colored baggy trousers. Intoning, "I, a disciple of Śākyamuni Buddha," he began a slow recitation of a sacred text, and to his attendants it seemed that no other voice could be so beautiful.

They could hear boisterous voices raised in song from fishing boats at sea. The boats were barely visible, a lonely sight in the distance, like little birds afloat on the waves. A line of wild geese flew by, their cries like creaking oars, and Genji's tears overflowed as he watched. The hand he raised to wipe his eyes, very white in contrast to the black prayer beads, comforted the men whose thoughts were with women in the capital. He recited a poem:

hatsukari wa
koishiki hito no
tsura nare ya
tabi no sora tobu
koe no kanashiki

That the first wild geese
raise sad voices as they wing
through travel skies—
might it be through friendship
with the one for whom I yearn?

Yoshikiyo replied:

kakitsurane
mukashi no koto zo
omōyuru
kari wa sono yo no
tomo naranedomo

It is not as though
the wild geese were my friends
in days gone by,
yet they evoke a train
of memories of the past.

Koremitsu:

kokoro kara
tokoyo o sutete
naku kari o
kumo no yoso ni mo
omoikeru ka na

I once imagined
I shared nothing in common
with crying wild geese
who had chosen of their own will
to leave their distant home.

The former guards lieutenant:

tokoyo idete
tabi no sora naru
karigane mo
tsura ni okurenu
hodo zo nagusamu

They find comfort
in being with their comrades—
even those wild geese
who go from their far-off land
to wing through travel skies.

"Imagine what it would be like to get separated from one's companions." He had accompanied Genji instead of surrendering to the temptation to join his father, the new vice-governor of Hitachi Province. The decision must have cost him secret anxiety, but he maintained an attitude of confident cheer.

The brilliant moon rose, a reminder that it was the fifteenth of the month. Genji thought with nostalgia of music in the courtiers' hall. In other places also, people would be looking skyward. He gazed intently at the face of the moon, chanting: "In the moonlight, my thoughts turn to an old friend two thousand leagues away."[26] Once again, his attendants could not help weeping. With a full heart, he recalled the time when the Fujitsubo lady had sent him the poem about intervening mist.[27] Other memories of the lady followed, and he wept aloud.

His attendants mentioned the lateness of the hour, but he lingered outside. [His poem:]

miru hodo zo
shibashi nagusamu
meguriawamu
tsuki no miyako wa
haruka naredomo

Distant though it be—
the celestial palace
I long to see again—
I find brief consolation
in gazing at the moon.[28]

He remembered the night when the emperor had engaged him in friendly conversation about the past, and recalled with nostalgia how much he had looked like their father as he talked. Murmuring, "The garment His Majesty conferred is beside me now," he went inside.[29] He did indeed keep always at his side just such a robe. [He composed another poem:]

ushi to nomi
hitoe ni mono wa
omōede
hidari migi ni mo
nururu sode ka na

I cannot feel
simply that he was cruel.
Conflicting emotions
have dampened both of my sleeves,
the left and the right alike.

26. From a poem by Bo Juyi, composed, like Genji's, on the fifteenth of the eighth month, the night of the harvest moon. The "old friend" was his boon companion, Yuan Zhen.

27. The lady had gone to the imperial palace to see her son, the crown prince, before taking religious vows, and Genji had visited her there on a moonlit night. Her poem: kokonoe ni / kiri ya hedatsuru / kumo no ue no / tsuki o haruka ni / omoiyaru ka na ("Might it be because layers of mist intervene? I must content myself with picturing from afar the moon above the clouds"). Wordplays and metaphors yield another meaning: "There are those in the imperial palace who dislike me and the crown prince. Is that why I am denied access to the present emperor?"

28. "Celestial palace" renders *tsuki no miyako* ("moon palace"), which here is an elegant way of referring to the capital. The notion that there was a palace in the moon came from China.

29. From a poem in Chinese by the exiled statesman-literatus Sugawara no Michizane (845–903): "Last year on this night, I served at the Seiryōden; in my 'Autumn Thoughts' poem, I spoke of secret anguish. The garment His Majesty conferred is beside me now; raising it high, each day I revere the lingering scent."

Around that time, the assistant viceroy of Kyushu was returning to the capital from his post. What with all his relatives, the entourage assumed imposing proportions, and it was decided that his wife should go by boat, taking with her the numerous daughters whose presence would complicate a journey by land. As they progressed, hugging the shoreline and enjoying the scenery, the women were charmed by the special beauty of Suma. And when they learned of Genji's presence, the romantic younger girls fussed nervously over their appearance—just as though there were any chance of his seeing them while they were in the boat. The Gosechi lady was even more reluctant to be towed on past.[30]

They heard the sound of a distant koto, carried on the wind. The loneliness of the spot, the plight of the musician, and the melancholy voice of the instrument drew tears from all in the party who were capable of refined feeling.

The assistant viceroy sent Genji a message. "I had meant to pay my respects and hear news of the capital from you as soon as I returned from the back country. It's a sad shock to find you living in a place like this. So many acquaintances and other people have come to meet me that I would risk causing you trouble if I were to call. It's a great disappointment; I look forward to another opportunity soon."

It was his son, the governor of Chikuzen Province, who brought the message. Indebted to Genji for an appointment as chamberlain and other favors, the son felt great sympathy and indignation but thought it best not to tarry, for people were watching and there were the gossips to consider.

"It has been difficult to see any of my old friends since I've been away from the capital," Genji said. "Thank you so much for taking the trouble to drop by." His answer to the assistant viceroy was much the same. The governor wept as he left, and the assistant viceroy and his entourage of greeters shed many tears, overcome by grief that verged on the inauspicious as they listened to the messenger's description of Genji's living arrangements.

The Gosechi lady managed to send off a note:

koto no ne ni
hikitomeraruru
tsunadenawa
tayutau kokoro
kimi shirurame ya

Is my lord aware
of an agitated heart
unsteady as the rope
slackened when our vessel halts,
charmed by the sound of a koto?

30. The Gosechi lady appears to have been one of Genji's minor interests. She has been mentioned once before, in "The House of the Scattering Blossoms" (not translated), where Genji says to himself, "The Gosechi dancer from Kyushu was an especially attractive girl." We learn now that she is the assistant viceroy's daughter. On the Gosechi dancers, who figured prominently in the court's harvest thanksgiving ceremonies, see McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 1: 376–77. Towropes, manned by sailors, were often used to move boats along shorelines.

"If I seem forward, 'please do not find fault with me.'"[31]

Genji smiled, looking so handsome that his men felt positively uncomfortable. He replied:

kokoro arite
hikite no tsuna no
tayutawaba
uchisugimashi ya
suma no uranami

If, through affection,
you wavered like a drawn rope,
would you be likely
to travel on beyond
the seashore at Suma?

"I never expected 'to find myself reeling in a fisherman's line.'"[32]

The lady was more deeply moved than the stationmaster who was favored with the Chinese poem;[33] she only wished that she might leave the boat and stay there.

As time went by in the city, the emperor and others missed Genji on many different occasions. The crown prince thought of him always, shedding furtive tears that wrung the hearts of his nurses—and also, most especially, that of Lady Myōbu.[34] For the Fujitsubo lady, ever apprehensive on the prince's behalf, the absence of the boy's father was a source of additional worry.

In the early days of Genji's exile, his brothers and his friends among the senior nobles sent him solicitous letters. A number of touching Chinese poems traveled back and forth, and Genji's compositions attracted universal acclaim. The Kokiden lady made her displeasure clear when she heard about it. "They tell us a man under imperial censure is supposed to have a hard time finding enough to eat, but this fellow sits around in his stylish house criticizing everybody. His toadies remind me of the sycophants who called a deer a horse," she said.[35] People grew nervous when unpleasant rumors of such remarks made the rounds, and Genji's correspondents stopped writing.

The passing of time brought no respite from grief for the lady at the Nijō Mansion. When Genji's attendants from the east wing first moved to the west wing, all of them doubted that Murasaki would prove to be the paragon their master seemed to think her, but they soon learned to appreciate both her sweetness and elegance and her generosity and concern for their well-being; and not one of them left the mansion. Those of higher rank, who were sometimes privileged to glimpse her in person, considered it only natural that Genji should have loved her better than any of his other ladies.

31. Anonymous (KKS 508): ide ware o / hito na togame so / ōbune no / yuta no tayuta ni / mono omou koro zo ("You who are watching: please do not find fault with me, for this is a time when love makes me as unsteady as a ship riding the waves").

32. He echoes the lady's imagery and quotes a poem composed in exile by Ono no Takamura (KKS 961): omoiki ya / hina no wakare ni / otoroete / ama no nawa taki / isari semu to wa ("Did I ever think to find myself reeling in a fisherman's line, away from all my old friends, cheerless in a distant land?").

33. The reference is to a poem that Sugawara no Michizane, the most famous of all Japanese exiles, recited to a sympathetic stationmaster he encountered at Akashi, near Suma, as he was making his way to Kyushu, his place of banishment. See McCullough, *Ōkagami*, p. 97.

34. The go-between who had helped Genji meet the Fujitsubo lady in private.

35. According to *Shi ji*, a treasonous official of the Qin dynasty tested the loyalty of subordinates by seeing if they would agree with him when he called a deer a horse.

The longer Genji stayed in Suma, the less able he felt to live there without Murasaki. But how could he bring her to a dwelling whose hardships seemed, even to himself, so severe that they must undoubtedly represent a punishment for misdeeds in a former life? He changed his mind; it was no place for her. Everything was so different in the country. He was unaccustomed to witnessing the daily life of commoners who knew nothing about him, and their activities struck him as bizarre and—if he did say so—not the kind of thing to which he ought to be exposed. From time to time, columns of smoke rose nearby. He attributed them to fishermen's salt fires, but they turned out to come from brushwood, smoldering in the mountains behind the house. Intrigued, he composed a poem:

yamagatsu no
iori ni takeru
shibashiba mo
kototoikonan
kouru satobito

Would that someone at home—
one for whom I yearn—might visit me
time and time again,
as burn the fires of brushwood
at the huts of mountain folk.[36]

It was winter, the season of snowstorms. To Genji's pensive eye, the sky seemed bleaker than ever, and he sought consolation in his koto, directing Yoshikiyo to sing and Koremitsu to blow the flute. With meticulous care, he played a series of melodies so haunting that the others fell silent, wiping away tears. His thoughts strayed to the lady who was sent to the barbarian lands long ago, and to the Han emperor whose misery must have exceeded his own. What if he were required to send his beloved Murasaki away like that? The mere idea made him shudder; it was as though it might actually happen. "Dreaming after frostfall," he chanted.[37]

A brilliant moon shone, its beams penetrating every cranny of the rustic dwelling. From his seat on the floor, he could see the late night sky. The light of the setting moon seemed unutterably lonely, and he murmured under his breath, "I simply journey toward the west."[38] Also to himself:

36. The English version is a rough approximation of the Japanese, which puns on *shiba* ("brushwood") and *shibashiba* ("time and again").

37. A Han emperor, Yuandi (r. 48 B.C.–31 B.C.), was tricked into sending off a beautiful consort, Wang Zhaojun, to marry a barbarian chieftain. The quotation is from a Chinese poem about the consort by a Japanese literatus, Ōe no Asatsuna, which reads in part (WKRES 702): "The sound of the barbarian flute: an end to dreaming after frostfall. Thoughts of the Han capital a myriad leagues away: heartbreak under the moon."

38. From "A Reply on Behalf of the Moon" (KKKS 511) to "I Ask a Question of the Autumn Moon" (KKKS 510). The full line reads, "I simply journey toward the west; it is not that I have been sent into exile." Both poems were composed in exile by Sugawara no Michizane.

izukata no
kumoji ni ware mo
madoinan
tsuki no miruramu
koto mo hazukashi

Over what cloud paths
might I also be destined
to go wandering?
It is embarrasssing
even to be seen by the moon.

Wakeful as usual toward dawn, he heard the plaintive cries of plovers.

tomochidori
morogoe ni naku
akatsuki wa
hitori nezame no
toko mo tanomoshi

Even when I wake
in bed alone, it is cheering
to hear my friends,
the plovers, crying with me
as daybreak approaches.

Nobody was stirring yet; he lay there, repeating the poem to himself.

Sometimes he devoted himself to pious recitations during the small hours of the night, after first cleansing his hands and mouth with water; and this also seemed to his attendants so remarkable and praiseworthy that they found it impossible to leave him, even for brief stays in their own homes.

It was no distance at all to the coast at Akashi. Remembering the Buddhist novice's daughter, Yoshikiyo sent off a letter to which she made no response.[39] Her father invited him to drop by to see him—there was something he wanted to discuss, he said—but Yoshikiyo decided against it. The prospects looked discouraging. His suit would probably fail, and he would look like a fool if he let himself get involved, only to come away empty-handed.

The father cherished extravagant notions of his own importance. The great ambition of others in the province was to form a connection with the ruling governor, but this eccentric gentleman bided his time, contemptuous of any such alliance. When he heard about Genji, he spoke to the girl's mother. "People tell me that the court has censured Genji, the shining one, the Kiritsubo lady's son, and that he has come to live in Suma. It must be our girl's karma that something so astonishing should happen. This is our chance to give her to him."

"What a wild idea!" the mother said. "From what they say in the capital, he already has all kinds of high-ranking wives—and there's even talk of a secret affair with one of the imperial concubines. A man who's attracted so many fine ladies isn't going to be interested in a plain country girl."

He flared up and answered with stubborn pride. "It's apparently too much for you to comprehend. My view of the matter is different. Just make up your mind to it. I'm going to find a way to get him here." He proceeded to furnish the house with dazzling splendor and to lavish all kinds of attentions on his daughter.

"Fine gentleman or not, why should our first choice for the girl be an

39. The girl and her father, the former governor of the province, were discussed by Genji and his companions in "Young Murasaki."

exiled criminal? And it's not as though he might fall in love with her, you know. The whole thing is just out of the question—not even worth joking about," the mother said.

The novice muttered to himself in an angry voice. "No matter whether it's in China or here, anyone as outstanding as Genji—as different in every way from ordinary men—can't help being accused of some crime or other. Do you know who he is? His mother was the daughter of my uncle, the inspector–major counselor. Everyone praised her to the skies, and Uncle sent her to court. Jealous rivals hounded her to death because the emperor made too much of her, but happily she left this son behind. A woman needs to aim high. Genji won't disdain our girl just because I live in the country."

The daughter was not a remarkable beauty, but in sweetness, refinement, and intelligence, she could have held her own against any great lady, just as her father believed. She was resigned to her unfortunate situation. Convinced that no man of any real consequence would notice her, she was resolved not to marry anyone more suitable to her own status. If she outlived the parents who loved her, she would become a nun, or perhaps drown herself in the ocean. Her solicitous father saw to it that she visited the Sumiyoshi Shrine twice a year, and himself offered secret prayers for divine assistance.

With the arrival of the new year, the days grew tediously long at Suma. The newly planted cherry saplings put forth their first hesitant blossoms, the air was balmy, and Genji often found himself in tears, his mind full of sad memories. With an aching heart, he remembered the pathetic figures of those who had mourned his departure from the capital late in the second month of last year. Now would also be the time when the cherry tree outside the Shishinden would be in full bloom. He thought of that cherry-blossom banquet in a bygone year—of his father's high spirits, and of the present emperor's refined beauty as he chanted one of Genji's own verses.[40]

itsu to naku
ōmiyabito no
koishiki ni
sakura kazashishi
kyō mo kinikeri

I never cease to miss
the men of the great palace,
but now the day has come,
the very day when I adorned
my cap with cherry blossoms.

Just when he was feeling bored to distraction, Tō-no-chūjō paid him a sudden visit. His friend was now a consultant, a fine-looking man with an excellent reputation, but court life had lost its savor without Genji, whose absence he felt on every occasion; and he had finally decided that he would not care if people heard about his trip and charged him with wrongdoing. As soon as he laid eyes on Genji, he shed tears of nostalgic joy.

40. The occasion is described in "The Cherry-blossom Banquet" (not translated). In the poem below, Genji refers to a sprig of blossoms presented to him by the then–crown prince when he was about to perform a dance.

The place where Genji lived seemed the ultimate in Chinese taste. The scenery was as beautiful as a painting, and the encircling fence of woven bamboo, the stone steps, and the pine pillars conveyed an impression of novelty and elegance despite their crudity.[41] Genji was dressed with deliberate rustic simplicity, his yellowish-red underjacket and greenish-gray hunting robe and trousers suggestive of a mountain peasant, but his beauty evoked an involuntary smile. There was a makeshift look to his personal belongings, and his whole sitting room was exposed to view. The go and backgammon boards, stones, and so forth were all of rustic make, as were the tiddlywinks pieces; and there were prayer beads and other Buddhist objects to attest to his custom of invoking Amida's sacred name.

When food was served, it was apparent that pains had been taken to make the meal interestingly appropriate to the surroundings. Some seafolk had come bearing a catch of shellfish, and Tō-no-chūjō summoned them. In response to his questions about their life on the shore, they launched into tales of insecurity and suffering. It was hard to follow their gabble, but he felt for them, moved by the realization that all men share the same emotions. He gave them robes and other presents, which made them think their lives had been worth living after all.

Genji's horses were kept nearby. Tō-no-chūjō watched in fascination as someone fetched their rice straw from a distant structure, which hardly seemed to qualify as a granary. He chanted a snatch of "Asuka Well,"[42] and then began to talk about the past months, punctuating his remarks with frequent tears and laughter. "The little boy's innocence breaks Father's heart," he said. "He worries about him day and night." For Genji, the thought of his son was almost too much.

It would be hopeless to try to record all that was said; I could not even do justice to a small part of the conversation.

They stayed up all night, composing poetry in Chinese. Tō-no-chūjō was in a hurry to get back, worried about gossip despite his protestations. He took up the wine bowl, and the two of them chanted in unison: "Melancholy in my cups, I sprinkle the springtime wine bowl with tears."[43]

Their attendants all wept, sorry to see their masters part after so brief a visit.

A line of wild geese flew across the dawn sky. Genji:

furusato o
izure no haru ka
yukite mimu

I look with envy
at geese winging homeward.
In what springtime

41. The images in this sentence are all drawn from Bo Juyi's description of his hermitage at the foot of Incense-burner Peak. See Tamagami, *Genji monogatari hyōshaku*, 3: 129, on the substitution of "pine" for the "cinnamon tree" of the original.

42. Presumably the line "the fodder is good." For the full song, see "The Broom Tree," n. 5.

43. From a poem composed by Bo Juyi when he parted from his best friend, Yuan Zhen, after meeting him for the first time in several years.

urayamashiki wa
kaeru karigane

will I set forth from here
to see again the capital?

Reluctant to depart, Tō-no-chūjō answered:

akanaku ni
kari no tokoyo o
tachiwakare
hana no miyako ni
michi ya madowamu

Well may it lose the way
to the city of blossoms—
the wild goose that leaves
before it has had its fill
of the far-off fairyland.

He had brought appropriate souvenirs from the capital, all very tasteful. Genji gave him a black horse in appreciation of the visit. "You'll probably think it's unlucky to receive a present from someone in my situation, but he has a tendency to neigh when he feels the wind," he said.[44] The horse was a remarkable animal. In return, Tō-no-chūjō gave him a few little things, including a fine flute, an instrument of some renown, about which he said, "Please value it as a keepsake." Neither of them could make his presents magnificent enough to risk criticism.

The sun had gradually risen. Tō-no-chūjō started off in a flurry of activity, recognizing that he should have left earlier. He looked back again and again, and Genji watched him go, his appearance so pathetic that it seemed he might have been better off without the visit.

"I don't know when I'll see you again. But you surely won't be here forever."

Genji replied:

kumo chikaku
tobikau tazu mo
sora ni mi yo
ware wa haruhi no
kumori naki mi zo

Look at me, O crane,
from the heavens where you fly
close to the clouds:
my conscience is as clear
as a perfect day in spring.

"I feel sure I'll be able to go back. On the other hand, men in my position have found it very hard to resume successful careers, even when they were distinguished figures before, so I really don't have any great desire to see the capital again."

Tō-no-chūjō:

tazuka naki
kumoi ni hitori
ne o zo naku
tsubasa narabeshi
tomo o koitsutsu

Yearning for the friend
with whom he flew wing to wing,
the crane flies alone,
raising his plaintive voice
in the cheerless realm of the clouds.

44. The horse, like its owner, misses the capital when the wind blows from that direction. Genji paraphrases part of a line from one of the Nineteen Old Poems in the Chinese anthology *Wen xuan*: "A Tartar horse likes a wind from the north." For a translation of the poem, see Liu and Lo, *Sunflower Splendor*, p. 30.

"There are many times when I wish I had never accustomed myself to the privilege of your friendship . . ." He hurried off without further speech, leaving Genji to spend the rest of the day in even deeper gloom than usual.

On the first day of the snake in the third month, someone who made rather a fetish of being well-informed said, "It would be a good idea for a person with problems like yours to purify himself today." Genji had been wanting to see the ocean anyway, so he went to the shore. He used bunting to create a makeshift enclosure, summoned a yin-yang master who traveled back and forth between the capital and the province, and had the ritual performed. The sight of the big doll, launched outward in the boat, reminded him of his own plight:[45]

shirazarishi
ōumi no hara ni
nagarekite
hitokata ni ya wa
mono wa kanashiki

No common sorrow
wears down the wanderer
who has drifted here,
doll-like, on the alien plain
of the mighty ocean.

The bright, expansive setting lent an inexpressible beauty to his seated figure. The vast expanse of the sea was perfectly still. Who could tell where those waters were bound? His thoughts moved on to his own situation—his past, his future—and he recited another poem:

yaoyorozu
kami mo aware to
omouramu
okaseru tsumi no
sore to nakereba

The manifold host
of gods heavenly and earthly
must surely pity me,
for I have been guilty
of no offense whatever.

A sudden wind sprang up, and the sky blackened. The purification ritual gave way to an agitated stir. A terrific downpour began, throwing his attendants into such confusion that they failed even to hoist the folding umbrella for his return home. Everything in sight was blown away by the phenomenal wind, which had been completely unexpected, and terrifying breakers made the party run for their lives. The surface of the sea glistened like a silk quilt; the heavens reverberated; lightning flashed. They struggled back to the house, in fear and trembling of being hit by a thunderbolt.

The men were bewildered. "I've never seen anything like it," one of them said.

"A wind will usually give you some warning."

"Totally bizarre."

The sound of thunder filled the air, and the pelting raindrops seemed capable of piercing whatever they struck. Gloomy and perplexed, the men wondered if this might not be the way the world would end. Genji recited a sutra in a calm voice.

45. During a purification ritual, a person rubbed his body against a specially prepared doll to transfer his troubles to it. The doll, usually made of paper, was then set adrift.

The wind continued into the night, but the thunder trailed off around sunset, as though in answer to the attendants' many vows.

"The waves would have swept us into the sea if it had gone on much longer," one of them said.

"I've heard that a tsunami will kill a person in an instant," said someone else.

"I've never seen the like."

Toward dawn, they all began to nod, and Genji dozed off into a dream in which an unidentifiable figure was searching for him. "You've been summoned to the palace; why don't you come?" it demanded.

"The dragon kings in the sea love beauty; one of them must have his eye on me." It was a chilling thought, one that made his present abode seem unendurable.

CHAPTER EIGHT
[13]

Akashi

[From the third month of Genji's twenty-seventh year to the eighth month of his twenty-eighth year. Fujitsubo lady: 32–33; Murasaki: 19–20; Rokujō lady: 34–35; Akashi lady: 18–19; Yūgiri, 6–7]

The rain and wind never ceased in the ensuing days, nor did the thunder subside. Innumerable things conspired to exacerbate Genji's loneliness, and he lost his habitual fortitude as he pondered his bleak past and future. What could he do? People would laugh if he let the weather drive him back to the capital without a pardon. And if he simply disappeared into the deep mountains, as was tempting, the gossips would probably say it was only because he had been afraid of the wind and waves, and he would go down in history as an exemplar of skittishness. His dreams were haunted every night by the same figure as before.

The days passed with no rifts in the clouds, and the lack of news from the capital grew increasingly worrisome. Was he destined to rot here like this forever? But the weather was too harsh for anyone to put his head outdoors, and no messengers arrived.

There was one exception—a wretched emissary from the Nijō Mansion, who was soaking wet when he finally reached them. It was inappropriate to his own station in life, Genji realized, and also a sign of vanishing self-respect, that he should feel as though he had found a long-lost friend in this humble fellow—a man whom he would have scarcely been able to identify as human if he had met him on the road in the old days, and whom his attendants would have promptly chased out of the way.

Murasaki had written, "This unbelievable stretch of rainy weather makes me feel that the very skies must be choked with grief. I lack even the consolation of looking out toward Suma."

urakaze ya
ika ni fukuramu
omoiyaru

In days when waves of tears
ceaselessly drench the sleeves of one
who worries from afar,

sode uchinurashi
namima naki koro

how great must be the fury
of the gales that blast your shore!

There was much else of a sad, affecting nature. New tears rose in Genji's eyes the moment he opened the letter—enough to "make the beaches more damp"—so that was almost blinded.[1]

"People in the capital say this wind and rain are a terrible divine message; I've heard talk of a Benevolent King service. And the senior nobles going to the palace . . . all the streets are blocked; the government's at a standstill." The messenger's speech was halting and uncouth, but Genji called him in for questioning, eager for any news of the city.

"The rain hasn't let up for days, and the wind never stops blowing. It's so unusual, everybody's amazed. But we haven't had this thunder all the time, or this hail that's hard enough to drill holes in the ground." The man was obviously terrified by the fury of the elements at Suma, and his woebegone face made Genji's attendants feel gloomier than ever.

More than once of late, Genji had been beset by an irrepressible feeling that this might be the way the world would end. But on the following day, beginning before dawn, a violent wind blew up, a high tide came flooding in, and mighty waves crashed ashore, their violence menacing the very rocks and mountains. The thunder and lightning were beyond description. Fearful of being struck at any moment, the attendants all panicked. "What crimes in a previous existence can have brought us to this extremity?" they lamented. "Are we to die without ever meeting our parents again—without ever seeing the faces of our dear wives and children?"

Genji pulled himself together, seeking reassurance in the thought that he had committed no sin for which he must die on this shore. To calm his agitated men, he made offerings of colored strips of cloth, accompanied by many fervent petitions. "O gods of Sumiyoshi, it is you who protect these environs. If you are truly manifestations of Buddhist divinities, come to my aid!" he prayed. His attendants feared for their own lives, of course, but they were also dismayed by the possibility that a man like their master might meet an unprecedented death in the sea, and some of them managed to summon up enough courage and composure to raise a loud chorus of prayer to the buddhas and gods. "I offer my life in exchange for his," each of them shouted. They turned toward the Sumiyoshi Shrine and offered all kinds of petitions.

"Our lord was reared in the emperor's great palace and enjoyed every pleasure, but that did not keep him from rescuing innumerable sinking souls all over Japan with his largesse. For what transgression must he now be

1. Ki no Tsurayuki (TN i.7): yuku hito mo / tomaru mo sode no / namidagawa / migiwa nomi koso / nuremasarikere ("The rivers of tears on the sleeves of one who goes and one who remains rise until they overflow and make the beaches more damp").

punished by drowning in these evil angry seas? Make your judgment, gods of heaven and earth!" they demanded. And again, "Why, when he has already been falsely accused, stripped of offices and rank, and driven from house and home to spend his days in constant uncertainty and sorrow—why should he also have to suffer this terrible experience, which may cost him his life? He wonders if this might be a punishment for a sin committed in a previous existence, or if he is being repaid for a transgression in this life. If the gods and buddhas are just, let them put an end to his travail!"

Genji prayed also to the dragon kings in the sea and to the myriads of gods, but the thunder crashed louder than ever. Lightning struck a gallery adjoining his quarters, and leaping flames burned it to the ground. His distracted attendants moved him to a rear building—a kitchen, by the look of it—and all of them crowded inside, regardless of rank, their frantic shouts rivaling the thunderclaps. When night fell, the sky already looked as though someone had rubbed it with an inkstick.

In time, the wind blew itself out. The rain subsided and the stars began to shine. Genji's men thought about escorting him back to the main building from his squalid shelter, which was an appallingly inappropriate lodging, but the surviving apartments were themselves unappealing, bereft of their blinds, which had all blown away, and full of confused people trampling noisily around. They vacillated, wondering if it might not be best to wait until morning. Meanwhile, Genji intoned pious words and pondered his situation with an uneasy mind. After the moon rose to reveal the closeness of the high tide mark, he opened the rude door and gazed absently at the surf, which was still turbulent in the wake of the storm. There was no discriminating person in the immediate vicinity—nobody capable of taking the past and present into account and understanding exactly what was going on. The only visitors were a group of humble seafolk, come to stand guard over their exalted neighbor. He found their incomprehensible chatter odd, but his men could not very well shoo them away. "The tide would have swept everything away if the wind had kept up a little longer. The gods really helped us!" a voice said. It would be a sad understatement to say that he felt forlorn as he listened. [His poem:]

umi ni masu
kami no tasuke ni
kakarazuba
shio no yaoai ni
sasuraenamashi

But for the succor
of the divinities
who dwell in the sea,
I would have been swept away
by the mighty tidal flow.

He had kept his composure while the wind raged all day, but it was an exhausting ordeal, and he dozed off unawares. As he slept, leaning against a support that was all the comfort his rude accommodations could provide, he thought the late emperor came and stood before him. "What are you doing in this sordid place?" his father asked. He took him by the hand and

pulled him to his feet. "Get into a boat and leave this coast immediately; let the Sumiyoshi gods be your guides," he said.

Genji was overjoyed to see him. "My life has been one sorrow after another since I bid farewell to your respected person. Right now, I feel like dying on this shore," he said.

"That wouldn't do at all! This is nothing but a small karmic retribution. I was guilty of no misgovernment during my reign, but I committed some sins without realizing it, and I have been too busy expiating them to concern myself with this world. Still, I couldn't bear to witness your misery, so I plunged into the sea and emerged on this shore. Tired as I am, I need to use this opportunity to speak to His Majesty; I must hurry off to the capital." He started away.

Saddened that the parting should come so soon, Genji burst into tears. "I want to go with you," he said. He looked up and saw only the shining countenance of the moon. He had no feeling of having dreamed. His father's presence seemed to linger, and a cloud trailing across the sky evoked poignant emotions. He had been vouchsafed a brief but vivid glimpse of the face for which he had yearned, fretting at his inability to see it even in a dream; and the vision, at least, was something he could always summon to mind. With a full heart, he thought, "He flew to help me when I was in the depths of despair, almost ready to die." It came to him that the storm had been a good thing, and in the aftermath of the dream, he felt trustful and happy. Then, with a sudden overwhelming surge of emotion, disappointment at the brevity of the encounter made him forget the problems of his waking existence. Why had the dream ended before he could answer? On the chance that his father might visit him again, he tried his best to return to sleep, but his eyes refused to close, and presently it was almost dawn.

A small boat came in to the shore, and two or three men approached the travel lodging. When Genji's attendants asked who they were, one of them said, "The new Buddhist novice, the former governor of this province, has fitted out a boat and come here from Akashi. If Yoshikiyo, the Minamoto lesser captain, is here, he would like to meet him and explain."

Yoshikiyo was surprised and puzzled. "I knew him when I was in Harima and have been friendly with him for several years, but there's a little bad feeling between us at the moment, a private matter, and we haven't exchanged any letters for a long time, not even perfunctory greetings. I can't imagine why he'd come here in these rough seas," he said.

With his dream in mind, Genji said, "Go and meet him right away."

Yoshikiyo went to the boat and met the novice. He could not understand how he had managed to set sail in such a violent storm.

"Early this month," the novice said, "a strange figure visited my dreams and told me something I could scarcely believe. 'I'll give you a clear sign on the thirteenth. Fit out a boat, and be sure to head for Suma as soon as the wind and rain die down,' he said. Just to see what would happen, I did equip

a boat, and then there was this terrifying rain and wind and thunder. Today is the thirteenth, and considering that there have been people who have saved the state by trusting their dreams—many in foreign lands, too—I thought I shouldn't let night fall without reporting the matter to His Lordship, even if he didn't consider it worth bothering about. When I launched the boat, a strange wind blew just behind us, and that's how we reached this shore. It's an unmistakable case of divine guidance. I am wondering if His Lordship recollects anything that might have happened here. May I impose on you to tell him all this?"

Yoshikiyo conveyed the message in private. Genji pondered his past and future in the light of the unsettling dreams and happenings that had seemed so much like divine communications. If he tried to avoid the criticism of posterity by rejecting what might be a true offer of divine assistance, he would run the risk of incurring more ridicule than if he accepted the novice's story at face value. It was bad enough to oppose the will of a living mortal. Even in trifling matters, it was appropriate, after all, to defer to seniors, and also to men of high rank and reputation, and to be guided by their opinions. Didn't the ancient sage say, "Follow others and avoid reproach?" Salvaging his posthumous reputation was by no means an overriding concern for someone who had just passed through an almost fatal series of horrifying experiences. And then there were his father's instructions in the dream. What need for further doubt? He framed a reply.

"I have suffered every conceivable bizarre trial in this alien place, but no messenger has come from the capital to ask after me. I've simply stared at the sun and moon, watching them journey toward their unknown destinations, and looking on them as friends from home. 'Great, then, is my delight when I behold the fishing boat.'[2] Might there be a quiet retreat for me on your shore?"

Delighted, the novice made grateful assent.

Genji's men urged him to embark before daybreak. He did so, taking along only four or five intimates, and arrived at Akashi like a bird in flight, thanks to the same strange wind. The two shores were almost within crawling distance of one another—a mere half hour apart[3]—but still, there was something uncanny about the wind's behavior.

Just as Yoshikiyo had said, the beauty of the coastal scenery at Akashi was incomparable. It would have been wholly to Genji's liking if only there had not been so many people around. The novice owned land both on the coast and in the mountains, and there were many noteworthy buildings in various places, erected with careful regard for the seasons and the environment—a reed-thatched cottage at the beach, from which to enjoy the changing seasons; a majestic Concentration Hall beside a stream from the hills, a location suitable for rituals and calm reflection on the life to come; and, to meet the needs of the present world, groups of rice storehouses containing the bounty of the autumn fields, reaped and stored as sustenance for the owner's remaining years.

2. Ki no Tsurayuki (GSS 1224): nami ni nomi / nuretsuru mono o / fuku kaze no / tayori ureshiki / ama no tsuribune ("Great is my delight when I behold the fishing boat of a beach dweller, sped by the wind to one whose sleeves are wet as from waves"). Composed to welcome an unexpected visitor.

3. An hour by modern Western count.

Alarmed by the high tides, the novice had recently moved his daughter and the others to a house at the foot of the hills, and Genji was able to go to the main residence with an easy mind. The sun had already risen when he left the boat for a carriage, and a mere glimpse of his face was enough to make the novice forget his advanced age and feel like a man with years left to live. He offered an immediate prayer of thanksgiving to the Sumiyoshi gods, his face wreathed in smiles. To his mind, he held the light of the sun and the moon in his hands; it was only natural that he showered the guest with attentions.

The setting was superb, of course. Only a painter of perfect sensitivity could have done justice to the tastefulness of the buildings, the charm of the groves, rocks, and grasses in the garden, and the indescribable beauty of the coastal waters. It was infinitely more cheerful and appealing than the place where Genji had been staying during the past months. The furnishings were as elegant as Yoshikiyo had said: the owner's lifestyle equaled that of the most august personages in the capital, and, indeed, seemed rather to surpass such establishments in luxury and brilliance.

After Genji had regained some of his composure, he wrote letters for the capital. He summoned Murasaki's messenger, who was still at Suma bemoaning the difficulties of the route and the miseries of the journey; gave him many presents, all finer than his station warranted; and dispatched him. He probably sent detailed descriptions of recent events to the prayer monks with whom he was on close terms, and also to other people with whom he would naturally have wanted to keep in touch. To the Fujitsubo lady alone, he related the strange circumstances of his escape from death. The response to Murasaki's loving expressions of concern did not come easily, and his letter to her was composed in a different way from the others, with frequent pauses to wipe his eyes.

"Now that I have suffered every imaginable disaster, just one thing after another, I simply want to turn my back on the world, but never for an instant do I forget your face as you said, '. . . to look into this mirror,' and the thought of taking religious vows without seeing you again is so painful that my other troubles pale into insignificance."

haruka ni mo
omoiyaru ka na
shirazarishi
ura yori ochi ni
urazutai shite

I have followed the shore
to a place even more remote
than the one once unknown.
How great is the distance now
from which I send my thoughts to you!

"I still feel as though I were dreaming: I'm writing this without awakening, and it may not make much sense."[4]

His letter was indeed rambling and incoherent, scribbled in a state of manifest distraction, which made his attendants curious about its contents. They realized that Murasaki occupied a unique place in his affections. Each of them probably sent home gloomy tidings of his own.

The persistent rains had ceased, the skies had cleared all the way to the horizon, and the fishermen seemed in good humor. Unlike Suma's lonely strand, where even a shore-dweller's rocky shelter was a rarity, Akashi was too populous to suit Genji, but the new surroundings offered much that was novel and interesting, and his spirits took a turn for the better.

The novice devoted himself to religious pursuits with admirable sincerity. He did worry about his daughter's future, however, and there were numerous occasions when he unburdened himself to Genji in a pathetic manner. To Genji, who had heard earlier of the girl's charms, his unexpected, roundabout arrival at Akashi seemed to suggest a bond from a previous existence. At the same time, he felt that he ought to confine himself to religious matters so long as he remained in his present predicament. There was also Murasaki in the capital to consider: she would regard it as a breach of his promises if he suddenly took up with somebody else, and he would be ashamed to face her. Thus he avoided any hint of interest in the daughter. But this is by no means to say that he viewed her with indifference, for many small things had conspired to convince him that she was exceptional in character and appearance.

Respectful of Genji's privacy, the novice stayed in a separate minor building and seldom visited the main hall. It was not a state of affairs to his liking. He would have wished to be with the guest morning and night; and he prayed harder than ever to the gods and buddhas for the fulfillment of his heart's desire. Although he was around sixty, he was a dapper man, appropriately thin from the practice of austerities. As a result, perhaps, of the good stock from which he had sprung—and despite a certain eccentricity and elderly vagueness—he was also knowledgeable about ancient customs, free of any taint of vulgarity, and well educated. Genji found a little relief from his boredom by encouraging him to tell tales of the past. In bits and pieces, he related stories of earlier public events—matters concerning which Genji had had little opportunity to become informed, engrossed as he had been in his own official duties and private affairs—and some of his yarns were so interesting that Genji actually thought he would have been the poorer if he had not come to such a place and met such a man.

4. This sentence, ambiguous in the original, can also be taken as an apology for future behavior: " . . . there may be many lapses on my part while I stay in this dream." Genji senses that he is caught up in a fated sequence of events, which will ultimately ensure his ascendancy by giving him a daughter who can become an imperial consort. (Murasaki is childless and remains so.)

The novice thus associated with Genji on fairly intimate terms, but he was too awed by his noble bearing and magnificent presence to speak out on the subject that was closest to his heart, regardless of his previous assertions. It was a frustrating, tantalizing situation, he lamented in his discussions with the girl's mother. As for the daughter herself, she had been made poignantly aware of her own inferior status by the sight of Genji's breathtaking beauty, coming as it did in a place where there were not even any ordinary fellows who could be called handsome; and she considered him hopelessly beyond reach.[5] Her parents' scheming appalled her; she felt worse than if no such paragon had appeared.

The fourth month arrived. The novice provided tasteful robes, curtain-dais hangings, and other things for the change of dress. Genji regarded his eagerness to leave nothing undone as pathetic and a bit officious, but he let him do as he pleased, aware that he was a man of proud and noble character.

A steady stream of solicitous messages arrived from the capital.

On a peaceful moonlit night, when the sea was visible to the horizon under a cloudless sky, the quiet waters merged in Genji's mind with the lake at home, and he was overcome by a feeling of unutterable yearning for he knew not what. The only land in sight was the distant silhouette of Awaji Island. He intoned, "In the distance . . . wondering, 'Can that be it?'"[6] [His poem:]

a wa to miru
awaji no shima no
aware sae
nokoru kuma naku
sumeru yo no tsuki

This evening's moon
evokes in encompassing light
Awaji Island,
where one wonders, "Can that be it?"—
and all my sorrow as well.

Taking his long-neglected seven-stringed koto from its bag, he struck a few notes, and his attendants watched with deep emotion, saddened by the incongruity of the setting. Then he played "Kōryō" with all the skill at his command.[7] The music-loving young ladies-in-waiting thrilled to the sound as it reached the house below the hill, mingling with the soughing of the pines and the murmur of the waves. Humble folk from here and there were lured forth to saunter along the beach and catch cold in the wind—people who would have seemed incapable of telling one song from another. And the novice hurried off to join his guest, unable to concentrate on his rituals.

"I can't help remembering the world I've left behind; it all comes flooding

5. It is not clear how the girl can have seen Genji, since they live in different places.

6. Ōshikōchi no Mitsune (SKKS 1515): awaji nite / awa to haruka ni / mishi tsuki no / chikaki koyoi wa / tokorogara ka mo ("Perhaps the place explains the closeness this evening of the moon I saw in the distance at Awaji, wondering, 'Can that be it?'"). There is a pun on the first two syllables of Awaji (the name of an island visible from Akashi) and *a wa*, "[as for] that."

7. "Kōryō" is said to have been a "secret melody" of Chinese origin.

back again. This place tonight must be very like the pure land in which I pray to be reborn," the novice said in tearful praise. Genji's own thoughts strayed to the kinds of things he and others had done at seasonal concerts in the past—to how one person or another had played on strings or flute, or had sung, and how he had always been singled out for praise, and had been made much of by everyone from the emperor down. As his fingers moved over the strings now, he felt that this could only be a dream, and the chill sounds he evoked drew tears from the listeners' eyes.

Servants were sent to the hill house for a lute and a thirteen-stringed koto, and the novice performed one or two interesting and unusual pieces of the kind associated with itinerant lutanists in clerical robes.[8] He offered the koto to Genji, who played a little while, long enough for the novice to realize that he was a master of that instrument as well. Even a performance of no great distinction may sound impressive in the right circumstances, but here an unbroken expanse of sea stretched far into the distance, the fresh charm of the flourishing natural groves surpassed the choicest spring blossoms or autumn leaves, and a clapper rail's call brought moving thoughts of the poem, "Who . . . bars the gate?"[9]

Genji was moved by the peerless tone of the novice's instruments and the gentle appeal of his touch. "What's really pleasant is to hear a woman play the thirteen-stringed koto in an intimate, relaxed manner," he said. It was a general observation, but the novice misunderstood him. He replied with a broad smile. "No woman's touch could be more appealing than Your Lordship's. I was taught by one of Emperor Daigo's pupils, and although my own lack of ability has caused me to abandon and forget worldly things, I've turned to the strings when I've felt especially low. There's someone here who has imitated my style with amazing fidelity, and who consequently plays very much as my teacher, the prince, did. But I am a mountain rustic with poor ears; perhaps it's only the wind in the pine trees that I hear.[10] I'd like very much to try to arrange for you to listen to her in private." He trembled with excitement as he spoke, all but weeping.

Genji put the instrument aside. "I should have known better than to play in a place where people wouldn't hear my koto as a koto," he said.[11] "For

8. *Biwa hōshi*, best known as reciters of *The Tale of the Heike*.

9. Identified in a Heian-period commentary as an allusion to an otherwise unidentified poem: mada yoi ni / uchikite / tataku / kuina ka na / ta ga kado sashite / irenu naruramu ("The night is still young when the clapper rail taps. Who might it be—that someone who bars the gate and won't let it come in?"). The clapper rail, or ruddy crake, is a small, secretive bird whose single note suggests the sound of a knock at the door.

10. Old commentary: matsukaze ni / mimi naretekeru / yamabushi wa / koto o koto to mo / omowazarikeri ("The mountain rustic, his ears attuned to the voice of the wind in the pines, is unable to recognize a koto as a koto"). See Tamagami, *Genji monogatari hyōshaku*, 3: 191.

11. Genji twists the meaning of the same poem: "I am clearly an amateur in the company of experts—people who will scarcely consider my koto a koto."

some reason, it's always been women who have made a study of the thirteen-stringed koto. Emperor Saga gave personal instruction to his fifth daughter, and she is supposed to have been the finest musician of her time, but nobody keeps her style alive. Our famous contemporaries merely strum the instrument as a pastime. It's fascinating that the tradition should have survived here without anyone's knowing about it. I must hear your pupil."

"No problem! If you want to call her in, that's fine, too. We know there was once somebody who won praise as a lutanist, even though she was only a merchant's wife.[12] Speaking of the lute, few musicians in any era have been able to elicit that instrument's true tones, but this same person plays it with really superior fluency and charm. I don't know how she's managed to master it. It hurts to hear such music merge with the noise of crashing waves, but on the other hand, there are times when her playing takes my mind off my troubles."

Intrigued by the refinement of his taste, Genji gave him the koto to play in place of the lute, and he addressed the instrument in a style that was indeed superior to the ordinary run of performances. He played strains no longer to be heard in our day, employing a brilliant Chinese fingering technique, and agitating the strings with his left hand to produce deep, silvery tones. They were not on the shores of the Sea of Ise, but Genji told the good singers among his men to sing, "Let's pick up the seashells on the clean strand" and other songs.[13] From time to time, he took up the clappers and joined the chorus, causing the novice to pause and offer words of praise.

The novice presented an array of ingenious tidbits to accompany the wine, plied the gentlemen with drink, and otherwise saw to it that the night became an occasion for forgetting their woes.

A cool wind blew through the pine trees as the night advanced, and the setting moon shone ever brighter as it neared the horizon. In the pervading quiet, the novice unburdened himself without reserve, speaking in fits and starts of his worries during his early days at Akashi, and of his present religious activities, and voluntarily bringing up the subject of his daughter. It was amusing that he should be so forward about the girl, but some of his remarks touched Genji's heart.

"Awkward as it is to say so, I believe that the gods and buddhas I've prayed to for years may have decided to subject you to temporary hardships because they pitied me, and that that explains why you have come like this, however briefly, to a place where you could never have dreamed of living.

12. A reference to the former singing girl, now a tea merchant's wife, who is the subject of Bo Juyi's "Lute Song." For a translation of the poem, see Bynner and Kiang, *Jade Mountain*, pp. 125–29.

13. "The Sea of Ise" (a *saibara*): "On the clean strand of the Sea of Ise, of the Sea of Ise, let us when the tide is out pluck the sea grape! pick up the seashells, YA! pick up the gemlike pebbles, YA!"

It's been eighteen years since I first placed my faith in the gods of Sumiyoshi. Ever since my daughter was a baby, I've had plans for her, and I've never failed to visit the shrine twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall.[14] I hope to be reborn in the pure land, of course, but when I perform the six daily devotions, I merely pray to have my high aspirations for her fulfilled. Even though I've turned into a miserable mountain peasant because of bad karma from a previous existence, my father was a minister of state. I used to fear that this descent into rusticity would doom my posterity to complete obscurity, but I've had something to hope for since the girl's birth. My heart is set on offering her to a high-ranking gentleman in the capital, so I've offended many whose status is as low as my own, and have borne the brunt of numerous unpleasant experiences. But none of that bothers me in the least. I tell her, 'As long as I'm alive, I'll manage to take all the care of you my meager resources permit. If I die while you're still single, be ready to drown yourself in the sea.'" Weeping, he said many other things of which I could not hope to give a proper report.

Genji's eyes filled with tears as he listened, for it was a time when his own mind was also beset by worries. "I couldn't understand what I'd done wrong—why I had to suffer from unjust accusations and wander in alien places—but when I take into account what you've said tonight, I feel from the bottom of my heart that the two of us must be linked by a firm bond from a previous existence. You were well aware of it; why didn't you tell me sooner? Once I left the capital, I turned against the transitory world and concentrated on religious matters; and as time passed, I lapsed into a state of unrelieved depression. I had heard a little about your daughter, but my self-confidence was shattered: I believed you'd think it was unlucky to get involved with someone as insignificant as I've become. So, then, it seems that you'll be kind enough to guide me? It will be a comforting change, too, from the loneliness of an unshared bed," he said.

The novice was beside himself with joy. [His poem:]

hitorine wa
kimi mo shirinu ya
tsurezure to
omoiakashi no
urasabishisa o

Do you too understand
how it is to sleep alone—
the dreariness
of lying bored and wakeful
nightlong at Akashi Shore?

"And please imagine how much more discouraged I myself have felt during all these years of constant worry." A-tremble with excitement, he still retained his air of gentility.

"But surely," Genji said, "it must be less lonely for someone like yourself who has grown accustomed to these shores." [His poem:]

14. The daughter, who now appears to be around 18 by Japanese count, would have been only nine when Yoshikiyo described her in "Young Murasaki."

tabigoromo
uraganashisa ni
akashiwabi
kusa no makura wa
yume mo musubazu

Beset by the grief
of one who wears travel garb
I long in vain for dawn,
unable to weave a dream
from my pillow of grass.

Sitting there at his ease, radiating charm, he was a figure of indescribable elegance.

The novice rattled on, but it would be tedious to write down everything he said. As it is, I have sometimes erred in recording his speeches, and I may have made him look more foolish and eccentric than he was.

Around noon on the following day, while the novice bided his time with heightened spirits and cautious optimism, Genji sent a message to the hill house. In view of what he had heard about the daughter's accomplishments, which promised to put his own in the shade, he gave serious attention to the possibility that this obscure corner might conceal an unexpected treasure, someone superior to many a fine city lady. He took immense pains with his note, which he inscribed on a sheet of saffron-colored paper from Korea:

ochikochi mo
shiranu kumoi ni
nagamewabi
kasumeshi yado no
kozue o zo tou

I call where treetops
mark the house of which faint tidings
reached me while I gazed,
sunk in gloomy thought, at skies
where I know not near or far.

"'. . . by the ardor of my love.'"[15] I believe I am correct in thinking that he wrote nothing more.

The novice had gone in private to wait at the hill house, and when the messenger made his expected appearance, he served wine until the man's senses reeled.

The daughter was very slow to reply. The novice went inside to hurry her up, but she declined to listen. Too embarrassed and diffident to try to answer a letter of such intimidating elegance, and overwhelmed by the vast gulf between Genji's status and her own, she pleaded illness and lay down against a support. Despairing of talking her around, the novice wrote in her stead. "Perhaps because rustic sleeves cannot accommodate such graciousness, my daughter is too awestricken to look at your letter.[16] Watching her, I have thought this:

15. Anonymous (KKS 503): omou ni wa / shinoburu koto zo / makenikeru / iro ni wa ideji to / omoishi mono o ("How very firmly I had decided to hide it—and yet my resolve has been vanquished by the ardor of my love").

16. Similar sentiments are expressed in an anonymous old poem (KKS 865): ureshiki o / nani ni tsutsumamu / karakoromo / tamoto yutaka ni / tate to iwamashi o ("In what might I wrap the great happiness I feel? Had I foreseen it, I would have said, 'Make wide sleeves on this robe of Chinese silk'").

nagamuramu
onaji kumoi o
nagamuru wa
omoi mo onaji
omoi naruran

That her gaze, like yours,
should turn in pensive thought
to those selfsame skies—
surely it must be because
the thoughts are also the same.

"Forgive me for straying into the realm of romance."

The letter was written on Michinoku paper in an old-fashioned hand, embellished with smart flourishes. He did seem interested in matters of the heart, Genji thought in some surprise.

As a reward for his services, the novice gave the messenger a superb set of women's robes.

Genji wrote again on the following day. "I've never received a surrogate letter before."

ibuseku mo
kokoro ni mono o
nayamu ka na
ya yo ya ika ni to
tou hito mo nami

Overcome with gloom,
I suffer agonies
in my inmost heart,
for nobody cares to ask,
"Come, now, how is it with you?"

"I cannot speak . . ."[17]

This time, he wrote in a beautiful hand on very soft, thin paper. No young girl could have looked at it with indifference—not unless she was irremediably shy and retiring. To the daughter it seemed quite wonderful, but she considered a relationship with him out of the question for someone of her inferior status; it was merely cause for tears that he should approach her as an equal. She adopted the same immobile pose as before, and only after a veritable barrage of entreaties did she consent to write a few words on a sheet of heavily scented purple paper, varying the blackness of the ink to conceal any possible calligraphic flaws:

omouramu
kokoro no hodo ya
ya yo ika ni
mada minu hito no
kiki ka nayamamu

What is the extent
of the love you profess?
Has rumor sufficed
to trouble the mind of one
who has never yet met me?

Her handwriting and literary address were aristocratic, not vastly inferior to those of a great lady.

Genji was diverted by the correspondence, which brought back memories of his life in the capital, but he preferred not to attract comment by appearing overeager. He wrote at intervals of two or three days, choosing plausible occasions—tedious evenings, lonely mornings before daybreak, and other

17. Old commentary: koishi to mo / mada minu hito no / iigatami / kokoro ni mono no / nagekashiki ka na ("An indefinable feeling of melancholy pervades my spirit; I cannot speak of my love to one I have never met").

times when he guessed that her feelings might resemble his—and her replies were never inadequate. Impressed by her apparent prudence and dignity, he felt a strong desire to meet her. On the other hand, he remembered with some distaste that Yoshikiyo had talked as though she were his private property. It would be a sore blow to him if Genji thwarted his longtime ambition by snatching her from under his nose.

Now that he had traveled beyond the Suma Barrier, he worried about Murasaki more than ever. What would he do if anything happened to her? It was no time for silly games.[18] He sometimes weakened to the extent of wondering if he might not smuggle her into Akashi, but he always reconsidered. Surely he would not have to go on like this year after year. Why expose himself to criticism now?

One divine message followed another at court that year, and there were many causes for uneasiness. On the thirteenth of the third month, during a stormy night of thunder, lightning, rain, and wind, the emperor dreamed that his late father came to the foot of the stairs, near the *kawatake* bamboo, and stood scowling at him with a highly displeased expression on his face. He straightened up respectfully, and his father addressed him at length. It would seem that he probably talked about Genji. Frightened, but also moved to deep pity, he reported the dream to his mother, the Kokiden lady.

"When it rains and storms at night, people tend to dream about things that are on their minds. It's nothing to get into a panic about," she said.

Whether or not it was because he had met the full force of his father's glare in the dream, the emperor developed a distressing eye complaint. He and the Kokiden lady both performed every conceivable abstinence ritual. Then the chancellor, his grandfather, died. In view of the old gentleman's age, his passing was only to have been expected, but it was one more in a series of disturbing incidents. Then the Kokiden lady herself began to suffer from a vaguely debilitating ailment. It was most upsetting for the emperor. If Genji had truly committed no offense to justify his present adversity, karmic retribution was sure to follow. He told his mother more than once that he would like to restore Genji to his old position, but she always countered with a sharp reproof. "They'll criticize you for being flighty. What will people say if you pardon a malefactor before he's even been gone from the city for three years?" Time passed as he hesitated, and the health of both declined.

At Akashi, the shore wind blew with the special loneliness of autumn, and Genji felt very forlorn in his empty bed. From time to time, he suggested to the novice that he find a way to bring his daughter to the beach house without attracting attention. (He could not see his way clear to going to the hill house.) But the lady was of no mind to cooperate. In her view, only the

18. Anonymous (KKS 1025): arinu ya to / kokoromigatera / aimineba / tawaburenikuki / made zo koishiki ("When I stay away, just as a trial, to see if I can get along, my passion grows too intense to allow such silly games").

humblest country maid, someone in truly dire straits, would fling herself into the arms of a flirtatious visitor from the capital. She would face a future of abject misery if she yielded to a man who considered her unworthy of serious consideration, as Genji undoubtedly did. As long as she continued to live a sheltered life at home, her parents could cling to their impossibly extravagant hopes for her, but such a marriage would bring them endless anguish, not the joy they expected. It was sufficient happiness to exchange notes while he stayed at Akashi. For years, tucked away in her remote corner, she had heard talk of him and wished to catch a glimpse of such a paragon some day; and now, of all things, he was living where she could actually see him, if imperfectly—where she could hear the wind-borne strains of the koto he was reputed to play with unmatched skill, and could be cognizant of all his daily activities. Furthermore, he had gone so far as to acknowledge her existence and write to her. It was more than enough for a girl stranded among fishermen. Eternally conscious of the disparity in their statuses, she could not bring herself to think of meeting him on closer terms.

To her parents, it had seemed that their prayers of many years were about to be answered, but now they began to reconsider, beset by misgivings. It would be terrible for her if they blithely brought the two together, only to have Genji refuse to take her seriously. Despite his glittering reputation, the outcome could be devastating. Had it been a mistake, after all, to form their entire plan on the basis of indications from unseen powers, without considering either the man's attitude or the girl's karma?

Genji kept after his host. "As I listen to the waves nowadays, I long to hear the koto you told me about. Otherwise, the season will go to waste," he said.

The novice gave a diviner quiet instructions to choose a suitable day. He personally fussed over his daughter's room until it shone, paying no attention to his wife's nervous flutterings and saying nothing to any of the servants. And when a brilliant moon rose on the night of the thirteenth, he sent Genji a note, which consisted of a single phrase: "On a night too fine to waste."[19] A bit suggestive, Genji thought, but he put on an informal cloak, groomed himself, and set out late at night. He rode on horseback instead of using the resplendent carriage provided by the novice, which struck him as excessive; and he went alone, except for Koremitsu and a servant or two.

The full expanse of the shoreline was visible as he rode toward the hill house, which was a fair distance away. Gazing at the moonlit bays, "scenes to be viewed with dear comrades,"[20] he thought of his precious Murasaki,

19. Minamoto no Saneakira (GSS 103): atarayo no / tsuki to hana to o / onajiku wa / aware shireran / hito ni misebaya ("All being equal, it is to someone of rare taste that I would display the moon and blossoms on a night too fine to waste").

20. Old commentary: omoudochi / iza mi ni yukamu / tamatsushima / irie no soko ni / shizumu tsukikage ("Come, dear comrade! Let's set out together to see the moonlight on the bottom of the inlet at Tamatsushima Island").

and was seized by an urge to go past his destination and head toward the capital. He murmured a poem under his breath:

aki no yo no
tsukige no koma yo
wa ga kouru
kumoi ni kakere
toki no ma mo mimu

Fly through the heavens,
O horse with moon in your coat.
That I may see her,
even for a little while,
fly to the beloved city![21]

Set far back in a grove of trees, the house was worthy of note, an exceptionally elegant residence. In contrast to the one on the shore, which was grand and fashionable, its appearance suggested that the occupants must lead lonely lives. Anyone who lived there would run through all the melancholy thoughts a mind could store, Genji thought in an access of pity. From the chapel nearby, the novice's handbell rang in mournful accompaniment to the wind in the pines; and the exposed roots of the pines growing from the rocks made their own contribution to the tasteful effect. Insect voices chorused in the gardens.

Genji surveyed the scene. The daughter's private residence had been polished to perfection, and moonlight entered where a handsome wooden door stood the slightest bit ajar. He spoke a hesitant word or two, but the unhappy lady made no reply, determined to avoid meeting him on intimate terms. She was irritatingly high and mighty, he thought. In his experience, not even the proudest and least accessible of women had spurned a courtship carried to this stage. Was she snubbing him because he had come down in the world? He tried to decide what to do. To force himself on her in these particular circumstances would be a mistake. On the other hand, it would be humiliating to emerge the loser in a battle of wills. One would indeed have liked to "show him to someone of rare taste" as he stood there, agitated and annoyed.[22]

A nearby curtain streamer brushed against a thirteen-stringed koto, eliciting a faint sound. In his mind's eye, he saw her as she must have sat at the instrument, relaxed and unselfconscious, making music to pass the time. It was an interesting picture. He launched forth into a series of pretty speeches. Would she not even play the koto he had heard so much about? [He recited a poem:]

mutsugoto o
katariawasemu
hito mo ga na
ukiyo no yume mo
nakaba samu ya to

I long for a partner
in intimate talk—for the chance
of awakening,
halfway through, from this dream
of a world of sorrows.

21. Commentators describe the coat of the "moon-coated" (*tsukige*) horse as resembling the plumage of the Japanese crested ibis (*toki*), a white bird with "pale pink flight feathers, tail and beneath-wings." Description from Yamashina, *Birds in Japan*, p. 145.

22. See Saneakira's poem, n. 19, above.

[She replied:]

akenu yo ni
yagate madoeru
kokoro ni wa
izure o yume to
wakite kataramu

For one who wanders
ever lost in eternal night,
it is impossible
to speak with understanding
of which is dream, which reality.

The aura of breeding conveyed by her shadowy presence was a potent reminder of the lady who now lived in Ise.

Dismayed by these happenings, which had caught her completely off guard, the daughter fled to a neighboring room and managed to fasten the door shut. Genji gave no sign of trying to break his way in. But it could hardly have been expected that the matter would end there.

The lady was very aristocratic—tall and slender—and Genji felt quite at a disadvantage. He found it moving to reflect on the strength of the karmic bond that must have forced this relationship into being. No doubt his ardor was warmer now that the two had actually met. Usually so disagreeable, the long autumn night seemed to rush toward its close, and he took his leave with many loving words, uneasy lest others learn of his visit.

He dispatched his morning-after note in strict privacy. (One wonders if his conscience had proved troublesome.) Equally concerned to keep the secret, the people at the hill house refrained from bestowing lavish presents on the messenger, for whom the novice felt very sorry.

Afterward, Genji visited the lady from time to time, always with precautions to avoid notice. There were occasions when he stayed home, unwilling to risk a chance encounter with a gossipy fisherman—which was all too likely, he felt, in view of the fairly long distance between the houses—and at such times, she thought in despair that it was no more than she had always expected. Her father, who shared her misgivings, forgot about his prayers for rebirth in paradise and spent all his time waiting for Genji to put in an appearance. It seemed a pity that such mental turmoil should afflict a man who had made it a point to divorce himself from worldly concerns.

Genji knew—and from this we may understand the depth of his love—that he would feel penitence and shame if Murasaki learned about the Akashi affair from other people, even through whispers on the wind, and if she were to turn against him, even in jest, for keeping it a secret. Recalling times when she had reacted to his adventures with anxiety and indignation, gentle though she usually was, he asked himself why he had let such meaningless distractions cause her pain, and wished that he might live the past differently. His longing unassuaged by his visits to the Akashi lady, he wrote Murasaki a more detailed letter than usual. Toward the end, he said, "It's painful even to remember the times when my impulsive and irresponsible behavior made you angry with me; but now again, I've dreamed a strange,

fleeting dream. Please realize that I confess this because I don't ever want to keep any secret from you. 'The promises I swore . . .'[23]

"No matter what the occasion . . ." [he assured her]:

shioshio to
mazu zo nakaruru
karisome no
mirume wa ama no
susabi naredomo

The transient seaweed
has served the fisherman
as a diversion,
but he remembers someone else,
and salt tears fill his eyes.

Her answer was mild and endearing. At the end, she wrote, "I was reminded of many things when I read about the dream you couldn't conceal":

ura naku mo
omoikeru ka na
chigirishi o
matsu yori nami wa
koeji mono zo to

Mine was a naive heart.
Because of the vows we spoke,
I waited for you,
trusting that waves would never cross
Sue-no-matsu Mountain.[24]

Greatly affected by this uncharacteristic hint of resentment, which belied the placid tone of the rest of the letter, he stared at the paper as though unable to put it down, and the lingering effect made him cease his visits to the hill house. The Akashi lady felt that the anticipated disaster had clearly occurred, and that the time had come when she ought indeed to cast herself into the sea. It was far worse than she had pictured it in her imagination. "With nobody to rely on except two aging parents, I couldn't hope to amount to anything in the future," she thought, "but at least I didn't have any real troubles in my simple life. It's agonizing to be involved in a relationship like this." Nevertheless, her manner toward Genji was calm, with no trace of resentment. Moved, he grew fonder of her as time passed, but he slept alone more often than not, for it was deeply distressing to imagine the anxiety with which a certain great lady must be enduring the long months, his plight never absent from her mind. He painted many different kinds of pictures, assembled them, and added poems to express his thoughts, leaving room for the replies he hoped to hear someday. The blank spaces would have touched the heart of anybody who saw them. Somehow, as though their minds had met in the empyrean, Murasaki had begun to keep a record of her own, a sort of diary, jotted down on pictures that she painted and assembled in the same way when she could find no other solace for her unhappiness. What did fate hold in store for them?

A new year began. The emperor was in poor health, and rumors flew. He

23. Old commentary: wasureji to / chikaishi koto o / ayamataba / mikasa no yama no / kami mo kotoware ("May I bow beneath the judgment of the gods at Mount Mikasa if I break the promises I swore never to forget").

24. Anonymous (KKS 1093): kimi o okite / adashigokoro o / wa ga motaba / sue no matsuyama / nami mo koenamu ("Would I be the sort to cast you aside and turn to someone new? Sooner would the waves traverse Sue-no-matsu Mountain").

possessed a son, the offspring of the Shōkyōden consort (a daughter of the current minister of the right), but the child was barely two, so young that it seemed necessary to yield the throne to the crown prince.[25] When the emperor pondered the question of who was to stand behind the new ruler and conduct affairs of state, he felt all the pathos and injustice of Genji's unhappy situation; and finally, in disregard of the Kokiden lady's remonstrances, he issued a decree of pardon. The Kokiden lady herself had been suffering from the attacks of a malignant spirit since the year before, and a series of portentous occurrences had also begun, all very unsettling to everybody at court. Now there was even a resurgence of the emperor's eye trouble, which had seemed to be clearing up (thanks, perhaps, to the assiduity with which he had practiced ritual seclusion). In wretched spirits, he gave instructions for the promulgation of a second decree, which commanded Genji to return to the capital. It was shortly after the twentieth of the seventh month.

Although Genji had believed that the court would relent in the end, he had worried about his chances of survival in a world of change, and the sudden recall was cause for rejoicing. But his happiness was tinged with sorrow, for he knew that his departure from these shores would be a final one. As for the novice, a weight seemed to settle on his chest when he heard the news, even though he had known it was only to be expected; but he cheered himself with the thought that Genji must first rise in the world if his own aspirations were to be fulfilled.

Around that time, Genji spent every night with the daughter, who had been showing pathetic signs of indisposition ever since the sixth month. Perversely, perhaps, his affection had warmed now that he was soon to leave her in such circumstances, and he thought gloomily of the strange fate that seemed to have doomed him to a life of unhappiness. The lady was desolate, as was only natural.

Miserable as the unexpected journey to Suma had been, Genji had taken comfort in the belief that he would return to the capital someday. Now that he was to set out toward that cherished destination he felt only poignant regret as he realized that he would never see these shores again.

His attendants rejoiced, each according to his own circumstances. People came from the city to accompany the party home, and high spirits reigned. Only the host, the novice, spent his days in tears as the month drew toward its close.

As though the parting were not hard enough to bear, it was now mid-autumn, a season when the very aspect of the sky calls forth deep emotion. His thoughts in turmoil, Genji wondered why he had always gone out of his way to involve himself in love affairs that threatened to ruin his life. Those

25. Having forced the withdrawal from public life of Genji and the Fujitsubo lady, who had been the crown prince's main supporters, the Kokiden lady's faction had apparently hoped to shunt the boy aside when the time came for the emperor to retire.

who knew him well grumbled as they watched him. "What can you do? It's the same old story. All this time, he's been lukewarm about her, just sneaking in for the odd visit when he was sure nobody would notice; now, he turns around and acts in a way that's bound to hurt her," they complained among themselves. It irked Lesser Counselor Yoshikiyo to hear them whisper that he had been the one to give Genji his first inkling of the girl's existence.

Two days before his departure, Genji went to the hill house without waiting until his usual late hour. It was his first good look at the daughter's elegant, aristocratic face and figure, and he asked himself, in sudden sadness, how he could possibly abandon such an astonishingly beautiful woman. He would find a way to send for her. To comfort her, he told her of his intention. I need not dwell on the splendor of his own appearance, which was handsomer than ever now that years of austerities had refined his features. To see him as he swore eternal love, his face shadowed with sorrow and his eyes brimming with tears, made her feel as though this alone were all the happiness she could want, quite enough to satisfy any woman—and, at the same time, served as a tormenting reminder of the social gulf between such magnificence and herself. Carried on an autumn wind, the noise of the waves sounded even more depressing than usual, and faint trails of smoke from salt fires added to the characteristic loneliness of the scene. [Genji murmured a poem:]

kono tabi wa
tachiwakaru tomo
moshio yaku
keburi wa onaji
kata ni nabikamu

Though I leave you now,
we shall be together soon,
just as plumes of smoke
from seaweed burned for salt
follow a common direction.

[She replied:]

kakitsumete
ama no taku mo no
omoi ni mo
ima wa kai naki
urami dani seji

The tumult in my breast
resembles a fire from seaweed
gathered by fishers,
but there would be no point now
in uttering vain reproaches.

Sobbing pitifully, unable to speak at length, she managed an accomplished reply when silence would have been rude.

Genji took it amiss that she had never played the koto for him, much as he had wanted to hear her. "If you really don't intend to reproach me, won't you at least play a piece as a parting gift, a memory for me to cherish?" he said. He sent for the koto he had brought from the capital and played a soft tune of exceptional interest, the clear notes resounding with incomparable beauty in the deep night. The novice, moved beyond endurance, brought a thirteen-stringed instrument and thrust it under the blinds. The lady herself was moved to tears, and she began to play in a quiet, exceedingly refined

manner, probably because there seemed no other way to bring her emotions under control. Genji had always believed that nobody in the world could match the tones elicited from the thirteen-stringed koto by the Fujitsubo lady. Hers was indeed a skill so flawless that the listener was ravished by the modishness and brilliance of the performance, and even felt able to form a mental picture of the musician's physical appearance. The Akashi lady's playing was enviably pure and elegant. Even to Genji, listening with a connoisseur's ear, her music sounded fresh and moving, and it was tantalizing to have her break off at the very moment when an unfamiliar melody had engaged his full attention. Overcome with regret, he asked himself why he had not prevailed on her to play for him during all these months—insisting, if necessary. He showered her with fervent promises about the future.

"I'll leave my koto as a keepsake until we play together again," he said. She half-whispered a poem:

naozari ni
tanomeoku naru
hitokoto o
tsukisenu ne ni ya
kakete shinobamu

Shedding ceaseless tears,
I shall cherish the memory
of facile promises
left behind, like this koto,
to make me rely on you.

Annoyed, he replied:

au made no
katami ni chigiru
naka no o no
shirabe wa koto ni
kawarazaranamu

Take care not to change
the key of the middle strings
on the koto I leave
as a keepsake until we meet,
as a symbol of our vows.[26]

"We'll definitely meet before the strings need retuning," he assured her. But she shed bitter tears, unable to think of anything except the misery of parting. It was only natural.

Genji left her house well before daybreak on the morning of his departure. It was hard to concentrate amid the bustle of his entourage, but he managed to find a private moment in which to get off a poem:

uchisutete
tatsu mo kanashiki
uranami no
nagori ika ni to
omoiyaru ka na

My heart swells with grief
as I depart from this shore,
leaving you behind.
But more painful is the thought
of your feelings, here alone.

The reply was a frank avowal of her thoughts:

toshi hetsuru
tomaya mo arete
ukinami no

This thatched cottage,
my home for many years,
will fall into ruins.

26. Wordplays add another meaning: "Don't stop loving me."

kaeru kata ni ya
mi o taguemashi

I wish only to follow
the path of the retreating waves.

He strove for self-control as he read, but tears rolled down his cheeks. People who were ignorant of the facts drew their own conclusions. "It's not much of a place, but he's lived here a long time; of course, it must be a wrench for him to leave," they said. Yoshikiyo was irritated. "He seems to be serious about the girl," he thought.

Despite their happiness, Genji's men went around with long faces. I believe they expressed sympathy with their master's feelings and exchanged lachrymose remarks about never seeing those shores again, but I must be excused from recording their conversations.

The novice made splendid arrangements for the departure. There were attractive traveling costumes for the attendants, even the very lowest. One wondered how he had had time to finish them all. I need not mention the magnificence of the garments he provided for Genji. And there were many chests of clothing to be taken along, carried by Akashi people. Chosen with taste and with meticulous attention to detail, the farewell presents were souvenirs worthy of being taken to the capital. A poem from the lady was attached to the hunting costume presented for Genji's use that day:

yoru nami ni
tachikasanetaru
tabigoromo
shiodokeshi to ya
hito no itowan

These robes for travel,
sewn and layered in a place
where the waves roll in—
will you find them distasteful
because they are wet with salt?

Despite the commotion around him, he composed a reply and changed his clothes.

katami ni zo
kaubekarikeru
au koto no
hikazu hedaten
naka no koromo o

There could be no doubt
that I would change into robes
bestowed as keepsakes—
middle robes to bridge the days
until we two meet again.

"It was so very nice of you." He sent her the robes he had been wearing, keepsakes that seemed likely to become still another source of sad memories. Fragrant and incomparably beautiful, they could scarcely have failed to move her.

Although the novice had supposedly turned his back on worldly things, he longed to escort Genji on the homeward journey, and much regretted, he said, that it should be impossible for one in his position. Oddly contorted with grief, his face probably made some of the younger people smile, pitiful though it was. [His poem:]

yo o umi ni
kokora shiojimu

Many are the years
I have lived by the salty sea,

mi to narite
nao kono kishi o
e koso hanarene

rejecting the world;
it remains beyond my power
to get away from this shore.[27]

"I know my mental turmoil will increase after you leave—my worries for her sake. If only I could at least go as far as the boundary of the province!" he said. To probe Genji's intentions, he continued, "I fear it may sound forward, but if you should happen to think of her sometimes, please send her a line or two."

To Genji it seemed a heartbreaking situation, and there was a redness around his eyes that made him look marvelously handsome. "I couldn't abandon her in her present condition. You'll soon come to understand what I have in mind. It's just that right now it's very hard for me to leave this house. I scarcely know what to do," he said. [His poem:]

miyako ideshi
haru no nageki ni
otorame ya
toshi furu ura o
wakarenuru aki

Not inferior
to the grief of departure
from the city in spring—
this autumn when I leave the shore
where I have watched the years go by.

More and more distraught, the novice cried harder than ever as he watched Genji wipe away tears. He was dismayingly unsteady on his feet.

The daughter's feelings were beyond comparison. Anxious to conceal her grief, she strove for composure. But she could not overcome her resentment at being left behind, reasonable though it seemed when she considered her humiliating status, nor could she forget the face that haunted her thoughts, and she lacked the strength for anything but tears. Her mother was at a loss to comfort her. "Why did we think of a thing that could cause this kind of misery?" she said to her husband. "You're so headstrong; I should never have listened to you."

"Quit complaining," he told her. "He may be leaving, but he'll think of the girl; he won't forget her when she's in this condition." To his daughter, he said, "Cheer up! Take a little sip of your medicine, at least. It's unlucky to carry on like that." He sat down in a corner.

The mother and the girl's nurses had much to say to one another about the novice's wrongheadedness. "For years, I hoped that someday soon, somehow, I could see her well settled, but look at the terrible thing that's happened—right at the outset, too, just when it seemed my dream had come true," the mother lamented. The sight of her gloomy face stirred piteous feelings in the daughter and made the novice more vague and absentminded than ever. He took to sleeping through the day, getting up at night with a show of briskness, seating himself in front of his icon, and rubbing his hands

27. On one level, the novice laments his inability to progress spiritually from this world (*kono kishi, shigan*, "this shore") to "the other shore" (*higan*)—that is, enlightenment. On another, he apologizes for not being able to see Genji partway on the journey.

together in lieu of his prayer beads, which, to his surprise, seemed to have got lost. His disciples made snide remarks. Going outdoors on a moonlit night with the intention of pacing the grounds while reading a sacred text, he fell into the stream and struck his hip against the edge of one of his elegant rocks. He nursed his pain in bed, and it was only during that period that he managed to forget some of his worries.

Genji arrived in the vicinity of Naniwa, performed a purification ritual, and sent a messenger to Sumiyoshi, with instructions to announce his intention of visiting the shrine later, in fulfillment of vows of thanksgiving for a safe voyage. He was unable to go in person this time because his retinue had suddenly burgeoned to unwieldy proportions.

He hurried straight to the capital, without pausing for side excursions. When he reached the Nijō Mansion, it was like a dream for everyone, both those who had waited and those who had gone with him; and there ensued an almost inauspicious hubbub of reunion, accompanied by floods of happy tears. Murasaki must have rejoiced in the life she had once considered meaningless.[28] She had matured delightfully into a woman of classic beauty, and her hair, which had been almost too rich and thick, had thinned to perfection during the years of grief and worry. For Genji, there was deep contentment in the thought that he could always be with her like this from now on, but his very peace of mind led him to imagine, with painful clarity, the unhappiness of the lady from whom he had parted while their love was new. It looked very much as though his life was never to be free of worries associated with the opposite sex.

He told Murasaki all about the Akashi lady. His manner as he reminisced suggested an interest that was more than casual, and Murasaki, as though surmising that the affair might be serious, murmured a line from an old poem, "about my forgotten self," adopting an offhand manner that he found amusing and lovable.[29] He marveled that he had been able to endure the years of separation from one of whom he could never tire—of whom the very sight was deeply satisfying—and he burned with indignation as he recalled the machinations that had driven him into exile.

The court soon made him a provisional major counselor, which was a promotion from his former office. When appropriate, his men were restored to office, and they blossomed forth in society like withered trees revisited by spring.

Genji went to the palace in response to an imperial summons. He looked more splendid than ever, and people asked themselves how he could have endured the years in those remote places. His presence stirred sad memories

28. A reference to her farewell poem in "Suma."

29. Ukon (SIS 870): wasurarуru / mi o ba omowazu / chikaiteshi / hito no inochi no / oshiku mo aru ka na ("I do not worry about my forgotten self; my only concern is for the life of the one who vowed by gods and buddhas"). The poet suggests that the divine powers may punish the faithless man with death.

in some of the ladies-in-waiting, decrepit old women who had served the late emperor, and who now wept aloud as they praised him, recalling the past as though it were yesterday.

Somewhat abashed, the emperor paid special attention to his costume before coming out. Although he was weak from his long illness, he had been feeling a little better for the last day or two, and he carried on a quiet conversation with Genji until nightfall. As a brilliant full moon cast its light on the hushed surroundings, memories of the past filled his mind, and he wept into his sleeve. No doubt he was in a depressed mood. "It's been a long time since we've had music—so very long since I've listened to your instruments as I used to," he said. Genji responded with a poem:

watatsumi ni
shizumiurabure
hiru no ko no
ashi tatazarishi
toshi wa henikeri

Like the leech child
unable to stand erect,
I lived for three years,
miserable and ruined,
by the shores of the sea.[30]

Conscious of both sympathy and shame, the emperor answered in a gentle, refined manner:

miyabashira
meguriaikeru
toki shi areba
wakareshi haru no
urami nokosu na

Now that you have come
full circle, as when the gods
went round the pillar,
let no resentment persist
from that parting in springtime.

Genji's first concern was to begin arrangements for an eight expositions service to benefit the late emperor's spirit.

He visited the crown prince, who had matured to an astonishing extent, and who received him with a surprised delight that he found infinitely touching. The boy was an excellent scholar, so bright that he already seemed capable of reigning.

He called on the Fujitsubo lady after he felt a little more composed, and we may imagine that that was another moving occasion.

I almost forgot to mention the letter he sent to Akashi by the novice's returning party. It seems to have been an affectionate message, written in privacy. "I worry about how it is for you on those nights when the waves roll in," he said. And:

nagekitsutsu
akashi no ura ni

Sharing your sorrow,
I picture Akashi Shore

30. One version of the Japanese creation myth says: "After the sun and moon, the next child born was the leech child. When this child had completed his third year, he was still unable to stand upright. The reason why the leech child was born was that in the beginning, when [the god] Izanagi and [the goddess] Izanami went around the pillar, the female deity was the first to utter an exclamation of pleasure, and the law of male and female was thus broken." Translation adapted from Aston, *Nihongi*, p. 20.

asagiri no
tatsu ya to hito o
omoiyaru ka na

veiled in morning mists—
vapors evoked by someone
who sighs the nights away.[31]

The assistant viceroy's daughter, the Gosechi lady, had decided to get over her secret crush on Genji, the futility of which had become apparent. She told someone to leave a note for him, with only a wink as a clue to the sender's identity. [Her poem:]

suma no ura ni
kokoro o yoseshi
funabito no
yagate kutaseru
sode o misebaya

I would that I might
show you the moldering sleeves
of the seafarer
whose heart went out to you
on the waters of Suma.

Though the hand was much improved, he recognized it. He sent off an answer:

kaerite wa
kagoto ya semashi
yosetarishi
nagori ni sode no
higatakarishi o

On the contrary,
it is I who must complain.
The wave that approached
left in its wake a sleeve
I have sought in vain to dry.

Her letter rekindled fond memories of a lady whom he had once considered enchanting, but he seems to have determined, around that time, not to get involved in indiscreet adventures. Even the lady in the house of the scattering blossoms received only notes, and his failure to appear in person made her feel worried and resentful.

31. This rather strained conceit is a conventional one, dating back to *Man'yōshū* (8th c.).