

## Entrance

They sat in a small wooden cabin, their bodies burned red by the candle flame, chanting a Buddhist sutra. The monotonous rhythm of voices harmonized with the cyclical motion of waves of the North China Sea. The waves hit the rocks of the small Japanese island. Their hands hit tin pans and sake bottles.

... KU FU I SHIKI SHIKI SOKU  
ZE KU KU SOKU ZE SHIKI...

An Indian Buddhist sutra, written in Chinese pictographs, chanted with Japanese words:

... Emptiness not different from  
form. Form is the emptiness,  
Emptiness is the form...

They found significance not in the meaning of the words but in the motion of the sounds. Voices and hands sacrificed one beat for a blue tablet.

Accompanied by the long low notes of a flute, a sparsely whiskered Japanese picked up a purple grape from the fruit plate and circled to his feet in the slow, rigidly defined movements of a

dance. Reddish-flamed hair of a caucasian girl writhed snake-like along the floor and coiled between his dancing legs.

The pink, slightly coarse tip of his tongue moved in ever increasing concentric circles around the grape's circumference. When he finished coating the skin with saliva, he slowly sucked it, then gradually sank his teeth through the purple into the gelatinous center, randomly spurting juices into his mouth, down the wiry strands of his goatee, and onto the body below him.

Wiping the saliva-soaked juices from her stomach, the snake-like figure coiled to her feet. She picked up an incense stick and, raising it imprecatingly over the flames, cast tarantula shadows onto the wall and the flute player. The spider crept up his body while she laughed mockingly beneath delicate eyebrows.

The flute player felt caressed by the dancing kaleidescope of flame and shadow surrounding him. He played the notes higher and more piercingly until the form which had once been attached to the tarantula shadow caressed his leg. The notes again became low and deep. He swung his leg

over her hips, thinking, "She's only a sound on the way to the pure note," and his breath continued to vibrate the bamboo wood.

As the chant grew louder, the flute notes shriller and quicker, the sake drummer's left leg became increasingly enraged at being connected to his body. The quivering flesh began to pulsate uncontrollably, and he was propelled to his feet like a wooden puppet jerked from limpness.

.. ..

The flute hung limp at his side. They believed themselves inside the wide angle lens of a camera, and clutched at each other and the solidity of the door, afraid of the formless dark beyond the threshold.

He felt the pressure of tensed fingernails in his side as they took a step forward and her arm tightened around his waist. Tripping on a small rock they felt themselves stumble into the picture.

"We fall. But not from destiny or wax melting our wings. On a clod of dirt. Every-

where is trivia and impurity."

Her arm clutched his waist as she involuntarily whispered, "The grass is an ocean moving too fast. I'm afraid to drown."

They slowly eased themselves onto the ground and lay back to watch the stars which alternately disappeared and relit as the clouds flowed over them.

As she tried to adjust her hips, she felt dizzy. Gravity ceased to exist and the Milky Way was a white space river into which they were plunging.

She pulled his head tightly into her breasts and, like the motion of a falling bird's wing, they began to make love.

As he closed his eyes and listened to the grassy waves flowing against each other and the clouds crashing into the stars, he felt the insignificance and impotency of his penis floating in space. He wasn't aware of a climax, but of a landing. The bird's wing touched solid and lay motionless.

The wind blew open the door of a thatched hut several yards away, revealing a Japanese

opium den in which a Buddha, yellow-red in the candle's flame, was surrounded by misty incense smoke.

"Nirvana," she laughed.

"... is an illusion."

Cicadas hurriedly rubbed their legs together, as if afraid of the night's stillness. The waves broke on the rocks below. He picked up his flute. Naked, they walked to the top of the hill to watch.

He saw a polished jagged rock look up at him and heard it laughingly speak about clothing and other forms of civilization. The rock beckoned him to join it, adding, "Your vision has already exiled you."

But as the flute player thought about the words, the rock dived beneath the formless waves, shouting, "Tepid imagination -- it's already too late," and, laughing angrily yet indifferently, shot foam off itself into the sky.

The wind was blowing hard and when he tried to play some notes on the flute, it muffled and distorted the sound. They slowly walked to the entrance of the thatched hut, and at the door

looked back at the space river and the ocean of grass,  
from whose womb they had just emerged. The wood of  
the door felt weak and insubstantial, and as he pushed it  
further open, the candle flame made her squint. Naked,  
they entered averting their glances from the brown staring  
eyes, and walked gropingly into the formlessness of the  
room.