

•
 Ask why I stay on the green mountain
 and I smile but do not answer; my heart rests.
 A peach blossom floats downstream –
 Heaven and earth, apart from this world.

Peach Blossom
 (after Li Po)

•
 These quiet days are ending
 and now I must leave.
 I miss my home's sweet grasses
 but will grieve at parting – we've
 eased each other's burdens on this road.
 True friends are scarce in life.
 I should just stay there alone, forever
 behind the closed gate.

Parting from Wang Wei
 (after Meng Haoran)

•
 First heaven took my wife,
 and now, my son.
 These eyes will never dry
 and my heart slowly turns to ash.
 Rain seeps far into the earth
 like a pearl dropped into the sea.
 Swim deep and you'll see the pearl,
 dig in the earth and you'll find water.
 But when people return to the source,
 we know they're gone forever.
 I touch my empty chest and ask, who
 is that withered ghost in the mirror?

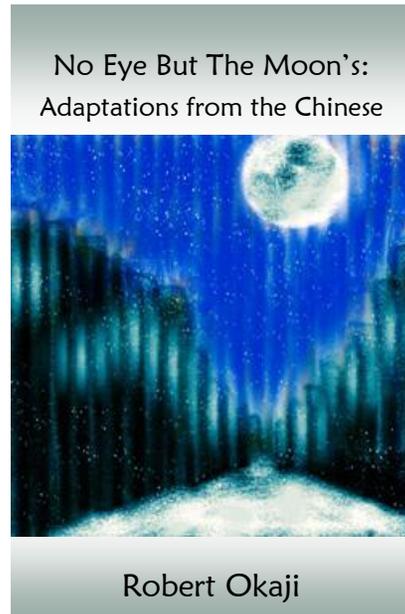
Sheng-yu's Lament
 (after Mei Yao-ch'en)

Cedar Grove
 (after Wang Wei)

•
 I sit alone among the cedars,
 play my guitar and hum.
 In this dark forest
 no eye spies me but the moon's.

- Robert Okaji

“These are adaptations of Chinese poems
 - five from the Tang Dynasty, and one
 from the Song. I call them adaptations
 rather than translations because I neither
 read nor speak Chinese, and have used
 transliterations to produce these
 versions.”



No Eye But The Moon's:
 Adaptations from the Chinese

Robert Okaji

•
 The breeze bends the grass along the road.
 A lonely car passes by.
 Stars reach down to touch these hills
 and the moon drifts behind.
 No one will ever know my name.
 I am too old and ill to work.
 Circling, floating, who am I
 but a vulture looking down.

Night Journey
 (after Tu Fu)

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 by Lauri Burke

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 Adaptations from the Chinese
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