



Black Silk

Donn Hayden

An 11 year old awakes before the late summer sun
has even made its glorious presence known.

The little girl looks towards the small porcelain doll,
neatly dressed, sitting on the shelf near her bed.

She speaks silently to her little friend whose
dimly moonlit eyes can somehow see her thoughts...

Grandfather Takahiro says we won't hear them,
but he is blind. So how will he know if they come?

Will I ever marry a nice young man? One who is
perhaps a boy I don't even know yet from my city?

As I do yours, my mother calls my hair Black Silk
as she gently combs it each night before I go to bed.

Will my mother ever roll my hair into a wedding bun
and then hold it together with bamboo sticks?

You have a Kimono! Shall I never wear the white one
that my grandmother is already sewing for my marriage?

Her doll is afraid, interrupts, and asks her to go and see.
They both fear that today may be the day the planes come...

Quietly passing the door where Takahiro sleeps, I pause.
I ask his ancient ancestors to protect both of us this day.

As the warm summer sun rises and breaks from the water
a tear forms in each of my eyes and one spills to my cheek.

If I see planes coming to my city like the two cities last week,
I don't know if I should run and tell my grandfather... or not...