

Translated by J. M. Wilcox

CHIYO-NI

1

Mountain after mountain
leaking tones of violet—
the first mists emerge.

2

Shadow of the moon
stands still too, starkly lingers—
cherry bloom dawn disc.

3

Flower of the world
enwound around and around—
dream haze moon dragon.

4

Sunthrust dawn crown torn—
intangible
to oblivious dolls.

5

Waterfall sounds dragon scales
unspool among the mountain spikes—
voices of the locusts.

6

The women again
with hair unbound, ribbonless,
go into the fields.

7

In rivers alone
darkness, swing of hinges, flows—
wow! wow! fireflies!



SAPPHO

1

Stars surround the stunning moon
and, kirakira, stain their girth,
when her swollen light enswoons
the earth.

2

To you, beautiful maidens, my head in flames
is not mutable, not a passion money-changer.

3

The pump and pulse of their hearts has turned to ice,
and winged up, unruffled, they let go.

4

Passion pounded, shook my
heart, like a jagged hurricane,
bright-bounding, dark-dropping,
moving down through mountain-oaks.

5

I try to touch with my two hands
but cannot reach the spectral bands
of the moon-and-star-nailed sky.

6

Curved core of beauty, crystal veil of grace.

7

Drive your chimes, skybright shell, wind-wired, tap your tones,
thrust your colors, —germinate! —succumb, unwomb your music.

