

JOURNEY
TALES

A COLLECTION OF WOMEN'S
STORIES



AMATERASU, from Japan.

WHEN I WAS A SMALL CHILD, from

NON GAE, from Korea.

BENGALI BRIDE, from India.

DEMETER, from Greece.

THE MOROCCAN WIDOW, from Mor

THE HEAVENLY MAIDEN, from Ko

TALES AND COUNTRIES OF
ORIGIN

AMATERASU, from Japan.

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A Bookwork by ANN M. KRESGE
Based on the Masks and Stories of
Suzanne Benton.

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AMATERASU
THE JAPANESE SUN GODDESS

In the beginning, woman was the sun.
She basked in warmth and nurtured the land.
When brother flooded fields and ravaged homes,
She fled to the walls of the silent cave.

The barest light sprang from the mouth.
The people sat by the circle of gold.
Her presence bathed the walls with rays.
With reveries of beauty she became serene.

Knowing she loved music and laughter,
A girl began to dance with bells.
Amaterasu listened and desired the world.
She flowed out of the cave.

Some say the dancer's pants fell down.
Others, that the spray of the mother sun
Spread joy and radiance among the people,
Sorrows were forgotten, the land grew again.



When I was a small child,
My parents left me for the first time
With an old woman.

For the first time I realized
That people age.
I was in awe.

She was so kind.
She let me touch her.
If I didn't poke her eyes.

She was so kind.
I was in awe.
She knew.



NON GAE

Non Gae is a Korean geisang
Of great charm and grace.
She entertains men
In the sixteenth century.

Korea is a land that has been
Conquered many times.
In times of war,
It is the women
Who are the prize.

The Japanese General
Conquers Chingu,
Province of Korea,
Land of Non Gae.

The General asks for Non Gae.
She agrees to meet the General
Brings him to a picnic,
To a beautiful site overlooking
A great chasm.

The General becomes drunk
She brings him to enjoy the view.

On her fingers are great rings.
She embraces the general
And locks her hands around his body.
Non Gae and the General
Fall from the ledge to the chasm below.

She is a martyr
In a land of martyrs.
The Japanese left Korea
The next day.



THE BENGALI BRIDE

It is her wedding day.
She is wearing a dress
She has never worn before.
It is very beautiful.

At her wedding,
She wears a veil.
She says nothing.

Afterwards,
She goes to the home
Of her husband's parents.

She has never seen them before.
She has never seen
Her husband before.
She looks at them.
They look at her.

Then, she folds up the dress
And puts it in a box.
It will not be worn again
Until her daughter marries.

Then, she begins
Her life
With these people,
As their servant.



DEMETER

I am Demeter
They call me goddess
Of earth.

I have prepared a field
For my daughter,
Persephone.

She is listening
To a butterfly
Land on a petal.

Flowers spring from her feet,
The ripeness of the earth
Rejoices.



A Moroccan widow
Lives in the same house
With her husband's other children.

All day long she works hard for them.
They yell at her.

At night she goes into the basement,
Where she lives
With her seven year old daughter
Who is very thin.



THE HEAVENLY MAIDEN

Came down on Diamond Mountain
On a rainbow,
Put her gorgeous garments
On a tree, and bailed in Silver Lake.

Woodman, advised by Golden Deer,
Took her brother clothes,
And she was lost to him,
Awaits his bride.

At first, life on earth was strange,
Then, she bore a beautiful child,
Even Mother-in-Law was happy,
Maiden named Topy-ty.

She bore a second child,
And asked for her heavenly garments,
Proud she would fly away,
Winkwink n' yan.

The first child was the most wonderful,
Woodman believed, she would never leave him,
*I ask you, if you could put on magical garments,
Did fly off to heaven, wouldn't you?*

With one child under each arm,
And inaudible between her legs,
She flew to her highest house,
Woodman was lost.

Even Golden Deer was sad,
He said, "The Maiden no longer true,
Down to the lake to bath,
They need a glass bucket for the water."

In the morning, the bucket fell into the lake,
If someone can pick it up and climb in,
The young and old live in heaven.



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