

A Cycle of Poems by Toyo Suyemoto, from *Trek*

GAIN
I sought to seed the barren earth
And make wild beauty take
Firm root, but how could I have known
The waiting long would shake

Me inwardly, until I dared
Not say what would be gain
From such untimely planting, or
What flower worth the pain?

--Toyo Suyemoto

Trek December 1942, p. 6.

IN TOPAZ

Can this hard earth break wide
The stiff stillness of snow
And yield me promise that
This is not always so?

Surely, the warmth of sun
Can pierce the earth ice-bound,
Until grass comes to life
Outwitting barren ground!

--Toyo Suyemoto

Trek February 1943, p. 20.

TRANSPLANTING

No anchorage in shallow dust,
No searching hold has found
More than shadows to grasp
Where hope withers in the ground.

Oh, guard the exposed roots against
Untimely sun and wind;
Some other soil may prove
More flower-wide and kind.

So let a richer earth restore
What once had died in need;
Strong roots will then respond
And bear tomorrow's seed.

--Toyo Suyemoto

Trek June 1943, p. 8.

PROMISE

Here is the seed nurtured
Through a long winter spell,
Now new-sprung to the warmth
Of sun from its dark shell.

A promise yet, will mine
Flower fulfill its leaf
And bud, and thus annul
Remembered frost and grief?

--Toyo Suyemoto

Trek June 1943, p. 13.

RETROSPECT

No other shall have heard
When these suns set
The gentle guarded word
You may forget.

No other shall have known
How spring decays
Where hostile winds have blown,
And doubt stays.

But I remember yet
Once heart was stirred
To song--until I let
The sounds grow blurred.

And time--still fleet--delays
While pulse and bone
Take count before the days
Lock me in stone.

--Toyo Suyemoto

Trek June 1943, p. 37.