

# GRAEME WILSON

## TRANSLATIONS FROM THE MANYOSHU

LADY NAKATOMI (*EARLY 8TH CENTURY*)

### PEARL DIVER

No-one dives to the ocean-bottom  
Just like that:  
One cannot learn the skills involved  
At the drop of a hat.

It's those skills slow-learnt in the depths of love  
That I'm working at.

HASETSUKABE NO INAMARO (*WRITTEN IN 755*)

### CONSCRIPT

"Good luck, lad," they told me:  
"Come home safe," they said.

I shall never forget my parents' words  
As they placed their hands on my head  
And gave me comfort; they who needed  
Most to be comforted.