

## ANDREW LANSDOWN

### FOR SUSAN

The tanka\* of the Imperial Courts  
are opulent with love and longing.  
And reading them at coffee-break  
I was filled with grief for you.  
All day, through the weariness of the working,  
I thought of my years with you.

Remember, my love, the swallows  
winging about us as we swam  
in the river at dusk?  
As if to celebrate our honeymoon —  
hundreds of welcome swallows  
skimming the water, kissing  
their reflections as they drank!

\*“Tanka” is a traditional form of Japanese poetry consisting of 5 lines broken up into syllable-counts of 5, 7, 5, 7, 7.

