

# THE QUARRY

Vanessa Ryan

In A Grove (two parts)

Rashōmon

**The woodcutter**

In a mountain

hollow, woodcutter

sees a body

wrinkled and

worn in a

smooth silk

kimono

splayed like

a spray

of bamboo

leaves fallen

upon the ground

blossoms of blood bloom

around the corpse

A gad-fly buzzes

languidly, the lone

witness.

## **The Samurai**

In the cool and green

bamboo forest

a samurai lies.

footsteps

somewhere

near here

razor edge

flash of

silent sword.

pain slices

like sunlight

through chest walls.

life ebbing,

with

each

receding

breath.

a killer

exits

like clouds

over the sky.

## **Rashōmon**

The servant waits  
at Rashōmon gate  
where thieves  
commune and corpses  
lay abandoned.

The servant  
discharged  
from service  
contemplates

a life of  
crime, or  
submit to  
the grime.

Foxes scavenge  
the ruins, crows  
circle a murder  
  
above the gate

like grains  
tossed by a  
violent wind.

A fat black  
cloud plops  
itself over  
Rashōmon  
like a curse.

Stone steps  
crumbling,  
rank grass  
growing  
dotted with  
crow droppings

A gloaming  
flickers from  
within, an unknown

evil shudders like  
an invisible hand

down the servant's

hunched back, he

crouches like a

lizard, slowly

crawls into

Rashōmon.