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Author(s): Ōta Shōgo and Mari Boyd
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The Water Station (*Mizu no Eki*)

Ōta Shōgo

Translated by Mari Boyd

Ōta Shōgo’s Note on the Playscript

This “script as document” is totally different from the original version written prior to rehearsal. In my conception of *The Water Station*, the first play of the Station Trilogy, the premises were acting in silence and, to make that silence living human time, acting at a very slow tempo. It was an adventure with no guarantee of success, but when I thought of placing a faucet affixed to a stand on stage, I felt the prospect of actualizing my conception.

A broken faucet center stage. A thin line of water from the spout. The sound of water. The variety of people as they come by, approach, touch the water, and pass on. In this composition, silence breathes as living human time, not as form.

But from there I had no idea what kind of script to write for the realization of each scene. When I tried to write the script, I felt that silence would be reduced to form. On the other hand, it would be impossible not to have a framework. Consequently, I made three sets of source materials. I covered the overall blocking in one set, and in the others I compiled excerpts from poetry, novels, and drama and included pictures. With these I indirectly delimited the movements and mentality of the characters. I could not write the script in a direct way.

The rehearsals began with such materials as script. The acting

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Ōta Shōgo was born in Jinan, China/Manchuria in 1939. Withdrawing from Gakushuin University in 1962, he became a playwright and the artistic director of Tenkei Gekijō Theatrical Company (1968–1988). His representative works are *Komachi Fuden* (1977) and *Mizu no Eki* (1981). Mari Boyd is an associate professor of literature at the Department of Comparative Culture, Sophia University, Tokyo. Besides her critical work on Virginia Woolf, Joyce Cary, Doris Lessing, and Ōta Shōgo, she has translated and directed plays by Betsuyaku Minoru. She is currently working on translations of Ōta Shōgo’s plays and essays. Photographs by Furudate Katsuaki.
could not be based on how to express the script, but it could be drawn out
with the general framework of the script as the starting point. What was
drawn out became the object of examination in rehearsal. What died was
removed; what lived was allowed to flourish. Through the repetition of
this scrutiny, the materials themselves lost meaning and faded into obliv-
ion. I understand the process as follows: by using “indirect delimita-
tions,” a way to realization was found, and through the rehearsals a
totally different directness was born.

The desire to stage living silence is the desire to act out the
“unparaphrasable realm of experience.” To enter that realm, this unstab-
le and complicated process was necessary and, I think, the only one pos-
sible. Hence what is recorded is the movement that resulted from the
complex discussions during rehearsal. It is a script of documented exter-
налs.

The composition is mine, I might add, but the inner state which
cannot be set down in movement or words and is left untouched is wholly
the actors’ own. Furthermore, the basic tempo of this play is a slow walk
of two meters in five minutes.1

Translator’s Introduction

In 1959, a student at the high school attached to Gakushuin Uni-
versity had the unusual honor of having his play performed by the univer-
sity drama troupe. That student, Ōta Shōgo, is now a leading Japanese
playwright of international stature. He has been active in the little theater
movement (shōgekijō undo) from its inception and has successfully created
an alternative theatre to the established shingeki, thus contributing to the
revitalization of modern Japanese drama. Best known for his experimenta-
tion with silence and rhythm-tempo, he has produced a drama stripped
to its bare essentials.

Ōta entered college in the 1960s, a time of much student discon-
tent over the U.S.–Japan mutual defense treaty. Consequently he became
absorbed in two activities—drama and politics—but his efforts to bring
these two interests into a fruitful synthesis were unrewarded. He admits
wryly that his insistence on political discussion in the university drama
troupe reduced the membership from forty to four or five (Senda
1983, 187).

After a brief involvement in two theatrical troupes, Hakken no
Kai and Engeki Kikaku Shudan 66, Ōta’s career took definite shape when
he joined Hodojima Takeo, Shinagawa Tōru, and others in founding the
Tenkei Gekijō theatrical company in 1968. In 1970, he became its leader
and served as the principal playwright and artistic director until the
troupe disbanded in 1988. As his multiple functions at Tenkei Gekijō
indicate, his life was devoted to the company. By tracing the growth of the company through its twenty years of activity, it is possible to understand better Ōta’s own growth as an artist.

The development of Tenkei Gekijō can be divided into two periods. The first started at the Akasaka Kōbō atelier with a seating capacity of sixty. This angura-style atelier was only a couple of rented rooms of an old apartment building in the middle of Tokyo. Ōta’s representative plays were performed during this period: Tale of Komachi Told by the Wind (Komachi fūden) (1977; Kishida Drama Award) and The Water Station (Mizu no eki, 1981). The latter became the first of the Station Trilogy, which includes The Earth Station (Chi no eki, 1985) and The Wind Station (Kaze no eki, 1986). The troupe’s frequent overseas tours, beginning as early as 1975, led them often to Europe and once to Australia in 1984. Both Tale of Komachi Told by the Wind and The Water Station won high critical acclaim and made Ōta Shōgo a familiar name in theatrical circles abroad.

The short second period began in 1985 when the troupe moved to the T2 Studio, a renovated warehouse on the west side of Tokyo. It comprised a small theatre with a seating capacity of 150, a rehearsal room, and lounge area. Their activities, which had focused on their own performances, now expanded to include theatre management and publications. They also performed four new works by Ōta during their four years at the T2 Studio besides presenting reruns of other plays and touring France, the United States, Canada, and Korea.

The broadening of their activities did not, however, result in an improvement in their financial situation. What was worse, it had a detrimental effect on the members, for the management of the numerous operations began to encroach on the essential task of creativity. Although the members were on very good terms with each other, Ōta, as leader, felt it was time to “change form” (tenkei). When the company decided to disband at the end of 1988, it was a tightly knit group of about fifty members with a nucleus of highly gifted players.

From the very beginning of his career, Ōta has been interested in the nature of dramatic expression. Tenkei Gekijō’s initial overseas tour to Poland had a powerful impact on Ōta in this respect. It was his first experience of a language barrier and, faced with comprehensive difficulty in communication, he felt he gained some objectivity on the kind of dramatic expression he had been searching for.

Ōta feels that while entertainment habitually deals with what is easily presented and communicated—the “dramatic” events of life—art should concern itself with the elusive, the intangible, or even the so-called boring aspects. He says: “Only what is difficult to convey is worth artistic expression. Only what cannot be presented in a ‘what-happened-and-how’ formula is worthy of expression” (Ōta 1988, 37). Thus he works for
a drama that employs the "power of passivity"—of being—rather than
the "power of activity"—of doing. In this drama of passivity he seeks to
portray the still center of reality.

His daring innovations in dramatic structure—silence and slow
tempo—are directed to this end. Most of us, according to Ōta, spend 90
percent of our lives in silence. Silence is human reality; hence verbaliza-
tion does not deserve the prominence granted it by a drama of activity.
Furthermore, by reducing the tempo to a slow walk of two meters per five
minutes, Ōta breaks the dynamic propulsion of activity and enables the
attention to linger on seemingly trivial events, leading to a new percep-
tion of life.

*The Water Station* is one of the best illustrations of his dramatic the-
tory. Against a barren landscape with a heap of shoes in the background,
travelers pass by a broken faucet dripping constantly and stop to refresh
themselves in various ways. There is no dialogue and movement, though
natural, is slowed down. Stark images of divestiture, wandering, and bare
survival are presented in their unrelenting entirety.

These images seem to originate in a childhood experience. Ōta
spent his early years in Beijing. In 1945, at the age of six, he and his fam-
ily joined one of the long marches to Tian Jin and then went by freight
train to the port of departure. The Japanese were permitted to take their
belongings, provided they carried the items themselves, but the need for
survival obliged many to discard their possessions along the wayside—
mountains of goods were left in their wake. This traumatic experience
seems to have made an indelible impression on Ōta. Even his dramatic
theory can be seen as a process of divestiture of usable but unnecessary
dramatic properties.

In his artistic directing, Ōta relies on the same "power of passiv-
ity." Together with a rigorous physical program emphasizing yoga, he
provides the players with a basic dramatic structure—a script and/or quo-
tations and pictures that approximate the emotion he wishes to draw out
of them. As far as possible, he then abstains from giving further direction,
trusting in the players' ability to respond to the imaginative stimuli. If he
feels their spontaneous actions are closer to his purpose, he revises his
text. Although he is the one to make the final decisions, he can, in this
sense, be considered an actor-centered director. Ōta intends to renew his
theatrical activities in 1990. It will be exciting to see what new develop-
ments will take place in this next phase of his artistic career.

NOTE

1. Translated from *Geki no kibo* 90.
REFERENCES


Senda Akihiko, ed. 1983.


**ŌTA SHŌGO’S CHRONOLOGY**

1939  Born in Jinan, China.

1960  Enters the Faculty of Politics and Economics at Gakushuin University (withdraws in 1962).

1970  Becomes leader of the Tenkei Gekijō Theatrical Company.

1976  *Kiga no matsuri* (Festival of Starvation) performed in Poland.

1977  Premiere of *Komachi fūden* (Tale of Komachi Told by the Wind); receives the Kishida Drama Award.

1980  *Rakei no gekijō* (The Naked Stage) published.

1981  Premiere of *Mizu no eki* (The Water Station); tour of London and Stockholm.

1982  Premiere of *Shi no bara* (The Rose of Death; later retitled The Plastic Rose).

1983  *Mizu no eki* (The Water Station) tour of Europe; *Dōshi no inei* (The Shadow of Verbs) published.

1984  *Mizu no eki* (The Water Station) tour of Australia; Tenkei Gekijō receives the Kinokuniya Drama Award Group Prize.

1985  Premiere of *Chi no eki* (The Earth Station); opening of the T2 Studio; premiere of *Sennen no natsu* (A Thousand Years of Summer).

1986  Premiers of *Yajirushi* (The Arrow) and *Kaze no eki* (The Wind Station).

1987  *Komachi fūden* (Tale of Komachi Told by the Wind) tour of Europe; premiere of *Mizu no kyūjitsu* (The Holiday of Water).

1988  *Mizu no eki* (The Water Station) tour of North America; tour of the Republic of Korea; *Geki no kibo* (The Hope of Drama) published; Tenkei Gekijō disbanded.

1989  *Mizu no kibo* (The Hope of Water) published.
THE WATER STATION

Onstage, a faucet with a broken spigot. From it water dripping in a fine line. A catchment receiving the water.

Upstage the old shoes and broken dishes of the countless people who have passed by. A black pile of junk, such as underwear, bicycles, birdcages.

MAIN ACTION

1. GIRL: Ando Tomoko
A girl
Alone
In the dim light
Comes walking

MINOR ACTION

STAGE DIRECTIONS

sound of water

Still brightly lit theatre.
The audience notices the girl.
On the way up the small incline
The girl unexpectedly stops

The back of the walking girl

The neck twists around
Toward the way she came
Toward the far expanse
Her face turns

From the far expanse her gaze drops to near her feet
Then to the direction she is heading

The profile of the girl
Walking

Fingers to the lips
Of the profile walking

Stopping the face turns to the watering place

The finely running water
The delicate sound of water
The girl descends to the watering place

By the water
She sits down basket on her knees

The girl watches the wind pass

In the girl’s hand a red cup from the basket

Audience lights dim.
Onstage the girl and the slender shadow of the faucet standing in the distance. The incline lies halfway from downstage left to upstage. A path stretches from upstage left in front of the heap of junk to stage right.

Lights brighten gradually; the stage transforms from a “long road” to “here and now.”
Toward the fine line of water
The red cup

The transparent line
Disappears into the red cup

In the gaze of her eyes
The red cup fills with water

From the line of water the red cup moves
To the girl’s mouth

The girl drinking water
The water flowing through her body
The empty cup the sky in the girl’s eyes

The hand stretching to the basket stops
The girl’s eyes turn to the old road

2. TWO MEN: Inoue Hirohisa (a)
   Sasajima Hirofumi (b)

   Two men approach
   The girl observing the two

   In the direction they came
   Looking far away the two men

   Man (a)’s eyes
   Shift to the direction he’s heading

   Man (a)’s ears the sound of water
   Man (b)’s eyes are cast far away

   Drawn to the water Man (a)

   Wearing an old suit,
   Man (a) carries bedding on his back; Man (b)
   carries a traveling case in his hand.
   Man (a) moves toward upstage left.
   Man (a) cuts across from stage left to water.

The sound of water,
present from before the
beginning of the play,
dies out; no sound.

Music: Erik Satie “Three
Gymnopedie,” No. 1.
Piano by Takahashi
Aki.) Low, as if gushing
from the cup.
Figure 7.
On Man (a)'s fingertips the line of water
Man (b) sees Man (a) sitting by the watering place

Man (b) goes to the watering place
Into Man (a)'s hands the line of water

Down Man (a)'s throat the flowing water

In Man (b)'s hand the line of water
Mouth savoring

Mouth to spout Man (b) sucks water
In Man (a)'s ears the sound of water being sucked
<zzzzzz>

Facing each other
Staring at the faucet the two men

Man (a) mouth to spout
<zzzzzz>

The faucet untaken

Man (b) brings his mouth near
Man (a), thirst unquenched, wrests the faucet away

The faucet untaken

Man (b) brings his mouth near
Man (a), thirst still unquenched, nears the faucet
Their mouths meet at the spout

Locked in a kiss they fight for the slender stream of water
The girl pays attention
To the actions of the two

The girl stands up
Their mouths leave the faucet
Facing each other the two men

Their faces turn to the sky
Man (b)'s finger stretches to the line of water the
fingertip wets cheek
Man (a)'s finger stretches to the line of water the
fingertip wets cheek

Turned to the sky
Their faces

Man (b)'s face turns to Man (a)
Man (b) sees the girl

The two men's eyes
Follow the girl

From the girl far away their gaze shifts
Picking up their belongings they stand up
The two men

In the two men's eyes
The far expanse

To the far expanse they strain their eyes
The two men

Man (b) cranes his neck toward the road ahead
Man (a) shifts his gaze to the running water

The two departing men

Music: Low, like the slow pace of the departing men.
3. WOMAN WITH A PARASOL: Kobari Kagumi

The heavily bent neck
The woman's heavy eyes
Turn from the way she has come suddenly to the sky

Having watched the men leave
The girl's eyes survey the area

The woman walks the air
She walks the air the woman's hand
Crawls up her body

The woman enters her range of vision

From breast to neck from neck to lips

The woman's steps
Stop with the opening of the parasol

The girl trying to look away from the woman

Again her bare feet
Move wildly along the ground

Cannot

The woman moves to far right.

The woman stops

The woman, downstage, crosses from stage left to right.

Hugging the parasol the woman shrinks into a crouch

The woman, downstage, moves toward the center.

In the woman's ear
The sound of water

The woman, downstage, at center.

The woman, attracted to the water,
Stoops down over the water

The trembling water surface
At the dissolving face the woman peers

To the faucet the approaching mouth
A fine line of water
Water flows into the woman's body
The woman’s eyes open
The woman’s neck twists around
Her eyes turn toward peering eyes
The woman’s dark eyes moving toward the peering eyes
The woman pursues the peering eyes
The woman watches the peering face
Her gaze relaxes
Looking away from the girl the woman sees
A human figure
Looking at the approaching figure
The woman smiles and grimaces
The woman’s face turns
Suddenly to the sky
The woman steps to the road ahead

Pressured by the woman’s dark eyes
The girl crawls up the heap
The girl cries out
Her open mouth her wide open eyes
The girl’s mouth Closes (slowly)
Avoiding the woman the girl steps
Toward the way ahead

The girl is on the heap.
Music: Same as before.
Loud enough to smother the cry.
The girl is on the heap.
Music: Same as before.
Loud enough to smother the cry.

The woman crosses stage from upstage left to downstage right.
The woman moves to upstage right.

A rope
Connects
The husband old baby carriage and wife

A baby carriage holding luggage.
It is moved to upstage right.

4. MARRIED COUPLE: Shinagawa Tōru
Suzuki Rieko
Tsujigami Shōji (the man watching from the heap of junk)
Stopping at the watering place
The husband
Looks back at wife

Far away gazing on the water
The wife's eyes are motionless

The husband's hand
Pulls the rope

The wife's body sways slightly
Her eyes shift from water to husband

To the watering place the wife pushes the baby carriage
The husband pulls in the rope

From the baby carriage
The wife takes out a flask

The two go to the watering place
The wife holds the flask to the line of water
The husband sitting down gazes far away

The wife's lips to the flask
Her face moves gently to the sky

The husband's hand
To the leg of the wife drinking water

The wife's gaze
From sky to earth

Wife is at the foot of the heap.
Next to the husband the wife sits
Passes the flask to husband
The water flows
Down his throat

The two look at the fine line of water

Flask in hand the husband stands
The wife continues to gaze at the line of water

The husband looks at the way ahead
The wife stands at the watering place

The husband looks back at wife
The wife bends down

The wife's hand reaches to the hem of her skirt

A white cloth drops
From the skirt

Spreading the cloth on the ground
The wife steps onto it barefoot

The husband watches

The wife sits in the white space
The husband removes coat and shoes

On the white space
Lie their two bodies

The husband touches his wife's hand

On top of the heap
The man opens a newspaper

The man watches the two
Centerstage.

The man turns away
From the newspaper
The man watches
The two from the top of the heap
The wife draws her husband’s hand to her
With his hand
The wife caresses her body
Breasts stomach legs

On the white cloth
Their bodies join
Their bodies loosen
The husband draws his wife’s body close
The wife places her hand on her husband’s body

Eyes gaze without meeting
Out in their respective directions widening far (COLOR PLATE 1.)

The husband and wife notice
The eyes

On the creased white cloth the husband stands
The wife pulls up the cloth

Wife and old woman face each other
The husband puts on his coat
From the top of the heap
The man looks at the two women

A step at a time they approach nearer

The two women
Face each other
Looking away from the old woman the wife approaches
the baby carriage
Husband and wife face each other

With chin cupped in hands
The man looks at the two
An old woman enters Music: low.

The old woman sees the two bodies
The old woman is stared at by the two

The old woman moves toward the water
The husband pulls the rope
The wife pushes the baby carriage

The husband baby carriage the wife

5. THE OLD WOMAN: Moriya Yuki

The old woman squats at the watering place
Fingertips to the line of water
From the line of water
To wet fingertips the old woman’s gaze moves

The wet fingertips
Wet her lips
Sucking on fingertips the old woman’s mouth
Swinging in front the basket on her back the old woman places it by her side

The old woman’s eyes move from the basket to the area
To far away to the sky

The old woman stands below the sky
She removes
The high-heeled shoe on one foot
And puts it into the basket

From the top of the heap of junk
The man watches the two leave

The gaze of the watching man
Moves from the two to the old woman

Uses umbrella as stick.
On one foot a high-heeled shoe. On her back a basket just right for a baby.

In his hands a telescope
Putting the telescope to his eye
The man looks far and wide
The old woman submerges
Her bent body
Inside the basket a small heap

Putting down the telescope
The man looks at the old woman

Following time
Inside the small heap
The eyes of the old woman open

The single high-heeled shoe is thrown out
The motionless basket
Inside a small heap

Within the small heap
From the open mouth a sigh escapes

The open eyes look far away
The faraway eyes close
The breath ends

The man draws away his gaze
From the old woman

From afar peering at the old woman

The head in the small heap
Is lost

6. THE CARAVAN: Masago Etsuko (daughter)
Takeuchi Makiko (daughter)
Edamoto Naomi (daughter)
Segawa Tetsuya (husband)
Kitamura Seiko (wife)
Aoyama Morio (young man a)
Yoneda Ryoo (young man b)
Ushiyama Kimie (young woman)

Music: Albinoni’s “Oboe Concerto,” low.

Each carries traveling gear. Three daughters carry a clothesline with the wash hanging from it, trying to get the clothes dry while they walk.
In a file
Walking
Many figures appear

The girls carrying the washing sight the man
Standing on the heap

Following the man's gaze
Eyes are cast toward the way they came

Looking even
Farther away the girls climb the heap

The married couple look back following the gaze of the girls
On top of the heap

Following the common gaze the young men starting up the heap
Look afar

At the end of their gaze far away
A small town

The town at the far end of their gaze
Trembles
As if reaching out as if screaming out
The mouths of the people open and cry

Closing
Their mouths They see
The old woman's corpse

Music: louder as number of characters increases.

(Color Plate 2.)

The man calm
His eyes cast at the town far away

Music: loud.

The man watches intently
Two young men raise the basket to the foot of the heap. The basket is carried to the far town. Her eyes move. The wife's mouth opens wide again. The mouth that will not close against the cheek of her open mouth. The flat of the husband's palm. The wife looks at the husband locked in a stare. Their eyes to the water. The husband holds out a cup. The husband carries the cup of water. The wife accepts. She drinks. The husband watches. The young woman heads to the water from the top of the heap. Watching the basket in the girls' eyes. Water raising the washing. The girls approach the water at the faucet. Fighting. The girls drink. Touching water. Absorbing water. They stretch their bodies. The girls faces. Laughter welling up. The girls look at each other holding up the wash. Swaying. Continue on the way.

The young woman moves to front of stage. The water flows down her legs. The young woman steps into the catchment. And sighs. The young woman gets out of the water. The town returns. The two men look on. At people moving about. Music: loud.

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The wife turns to husband
Eyes calm

The husband returns to the watering place
The wife finishes drinking

At the line of water
The husband stands

Man (a) walks toward the way ahead

On the top of the heap of junk
The man watches them leave

The many people

Stretching his body out to the water afar
The man sees in the corner of his eye

A figure

Wrestling Man (b)'s hair
in the water
Man (b) pulls his face out
Into the water
Man (a) sticks his face
Man (a) relinquishes the watering place to husband

Music: lowered as characters leave

Wetting his face
Sighing in the husband's eyes

The wife stands up
The wife looks
The wife walks

By the watering place

The couple
Follow the file

7. MAN AND WOMAN: Saô Kazuko Ōgi Ren

Two persons
Bodies close together
Come by

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In the man's ear the sound of water
The woman continues to walk on

From a distance
The man gazes at the water

The man buries Himself again
In the junk

The woman continues to walk

The woman turning around sees the man at a distance

The woman approaches the water
The man approaches the woman

Sitting down by the watering place
To the fine line of water and its sound
The man and woman turn their gaze

Standing up
Her fingers to the line of water the woman stretches

The past of the water
Passes through their eyes

Close to the man
The woman brings her body

The man looks down
On the two afar

The woman's back against the chest of the sitting man

Bodies touching, they sit

The woman's fingers touch the man behind
Tracing the contours of the face the toughness of skin
the line of the nose
Stretched out to the water
The man's hand moves now to the buttons of his coat
The naked man moves to the catchment and into the water
The woman by the water her skirt falls
The woman in undergarments puts her feet in the water
The line of water flows over the man's face
The man's body and the woman's body
Change positions in the water

The line of water flows over the woman's face
From behind the woman
The man's body touches the woman
The woman's hand and cheeks caress the man's chest
The man's hands caress the woman's body
In the water
Their bodies join

In the catchment
Their movements stop
The woman
Climbing out of the catchment
Her face contorts
From the catchment the man looks at the woman

The eyes on top of the heap
Follow the movement of the two
A man with a huge load
Comes along
The man sees
The bodies of the man and woman
Looking at the two
The man goes toward the heap

He buries himself
In the heap of junk
Hiding from the man
Who approaches
He climbs the heap of junk
And digs about

From water to down-stage.
To afar the woman opens her mouth
The man’s hand covers her mouth

Breaking away
The woman opens her mouth

The man looks on from behind

The woman clings to the man behind
The face of the man holding her contorts

The clinging woman’s body
Is set down on the ground
The woman squats down on the ground
The man embraces the woman

The two
Their wet bodies gently join

The man’s head is twisted to the water
The woman’s head is raised to the sky

The man’s body
Separates from the woman’s

The woman below the sky

The man dresses
The woman reaches out for her skirt

Their eyes meet and shift to the luggage

Luggage in hand
The two depart

Music: loud enough to erase voices.
“Three Gymnopedies.”

Climbing down the heap
The man looks at the two bodies

Music: low.
8. THE MAN WITH A HUGE LOAD ON HIS BACK: Ono Takao

With a huge load on his back
The man sits down

Taking off his right shoe
He throws it away

Changing it for a shoe from the heap
His eyes are cast far away

Suddenly his eyes move back
And see the cassette recorder

Music from the cassette recorder

Regaining strength from the music he walks
To the watering place

With the huge load
The man squats down by the watering place

Groping behind he pulls out from the huge load
Toothbrush and toothpaste

Gaining strength from the music
The man brushes his teeth and washes his face

The music from the tape ends in silent air
With the huge load
Squats the man

The man with the huge load
Looking away from the water
Stands up

The load is about three times his size.
In the darkening space, the shadow of the watering place and the man with the huge load.
The heap of junk.
His face turned toward the way ahead
Looks back unexpectedly

A lone figure
With the huge load
The man departs

Music: Albinoni’s “Oboe Concerto.” Low like the girl’s steps.

9. THE GIRL: Ando Tomoko

On the way up the small slope
The girl unexpectedly stops

The neck twists around
Toward the way she came
To the far expanse her face turns

From the far expanse her eyes shift to near her feet
And then to the direction in which she is heading

The profile of the girl
Walking

Fingers to the lips
Of the profile walking

The girl stops the face turns to the watering place

The finely running water
The delicate sound of water
To the watering place the girl descends

The girl fades into the darkness.
The sound of water remains.