



# They Wrap

They wrap, wrap, wrap

With a sheet of paper

With a sheet of cloth,

With a sheet of silk,

With a sheet of sheepskin,

With a sheet of brocade;

They wrap their bodies

Hoarded food and beverage

Their tools and weapons;

A jewel of memory,

A letter of devotion

Life sharing self-portrait

Life time secrets;

An icon of faith

Their scars and wrinkles,

A theory of discovery

A formula of invention,

The dream of life

Wishing it survive forever

Realizing that all fade away into oblivion

Remembering that all decay in dust

All decompose into organic chemicals

All rot with stinking smell

With appalling sight of swarming worms  
Knowing not that the more they cherish;  
The more it annoys them  
The more they treasure;  
The more it captivates them  
The more they are attached;  
The more it obsesses them

Without any ideas to give it away to the children  
To donate to the public institution  
To give up to the museums

Impossible to return it to the wind and breeze  
To the shower and sleet, snow and slush  
To the shivering cold of night  
To the scorching heat of the day  
To the animal bite and insect sting

Incapable to forget  
Unimaginable to leave it behind  
They wrap, wrap, wrap  
They store, store, store,  
They build, build, build  
They construct, construct, construct  
Tombs, houses, mansions, castles, palaces, cathedrals, temples, shrines, pyramids, Borobudur, Angkor Wat

Stripping all forests  
Cutting centuries old sacred trees  
Demolishing monumental hills and knolls  
Changing the flow of rivers  
Draining lakes and ponds

At the labor of the powerless

To avoid cold and hot,

Arid or humid,

Coarse or greasy

Oh!

Sensitivity,

Commander-in-chief?

Look at the flowers

Scattering petals holds on emptiness

Look upon the birds

Flown away by the winds

To the empty space without returning to the forms

See the fishes

Broken to pieces into rapid mountain stream

After achieving spawning

Watch at the man lying down among the four sala-trees

Manifests *mahaparinibbana*

Observe the full moon

Shining all alone in the void to decrescent

**Natsuo Shibuya**