

## **Searching for Kyoto**

I'm searching for Kyoto  
storied capital of island country  
autumn moon over woodblock-printed bridges  
villagers heading home from rice paddies  
waterfalls leap through bamboo forests  
on the other side of my world

I long for Kyoto  
digging holes with Bobby  
behind our Granby house of brick  
teasing each other about what  
we'll do when we come out  
on the other side of the world

I probe Kyoto  
to hear the cuckoo tell of sacred pathways  
trod for centuries by seekers' feet  
incense wafting under spreading banyan trees  
fragrance of ancient masters in spirit dwellings  
where bells intone the message for my heart

Kyoto  
for a sliding screen to still my monkey mind  
seventeen syllables to shepherd me  
from the outer world to the inner  
a pivot word to whisper the way  
cherry blossoms come and go

Ellen B. Ryan

*Tower Poetry*, 2012, 60(2), 36.