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Japanese Love Poems: Selections from the Manyoshu

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Japanese Love Poems: Selections from the Manyoshu
Known as the "Collection of Myriad Leaves," or the "Collection for a Myriad Ages," the Manyoshu is Japan's most significant early anthology of poetry. The poems date from the eighth century and earlier, and their simplicity and sincerity offer glimpses of a literary culture beginning to define itself.
The Manyoshu is virtually silent on the topics of war and the martial spirit; explorations of the many forms of love, however, appear throughout the collection's more than 4,000 poems. The poems selected for this volume comprise paeans to conjugal love, celebrations of intense filial piety and the love between brothers and sisters, descriptions of the fierce competition for spouses, and tributes to forbidden attachments. The Manyo poets wrote in a primitively vital and sensuous language as they experimented with form and subject.

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