

Aka Tombo 赤とんぼ (Red Dragonfly, 1927)

Music by YAMADA Kōsaku 山田耕筰 (1886-1965)

Text by MIKI Rofū 三木露風 (1889-1964)

1.

ゆうやけ こやけの あかとんぼ
Yūyake koyake-no aka-tombo
(evening burn small burn red dragonfly)

夕やけ小やけの あかとんぼ
(In the evening red sky, red dragonfly)

おわれて みたのは いつの ひか
Owarete mitanowa itsu-no hi-ka
(piggybacked looked was which day?)

負われて見たのは いつの日か
(I saw while piggybacked, when was it?)

2.

やまの はたけの くわの みを
Yama-no hatake-no kuwa-no mi-o
(mountain of vegetable field of mulberry of fruits)

山の畑の 桑の実を
(Mulberries from the mountain field)

こかごに つんだは まぼろしか
Ko-kago*-ni tsunda-wa maboroshi-ka *g [ŋ]
(small basket in picked was phantom?) (soft g)

小籠に摘んだは まぼろしか
(Picking them into a small basket, was it
a phantom?)

3.

じゅうごで ねえやは よめに ゆき
Jūgo*-de nēya-wa yome-ni yuki *g [g]
(15 at nanny bride went) (hard g)

十五で姐やは 嫁に行き
(At 15 years old, my nanny got married and left)

おさとの たよりも たえはてた
Osato-no tayori-mo taehateta
(home town letters also extinguished)

お里のたよりも 絶えはてた
(Letters to her home also have stopped)

4.

ゆうやけ こやけの あかとんぼ
Yūyake koyake-no aka-tombo
(evening burn small burn red dragonfly)

夕やけ小やけの あかとんぼ
(In the evening red sky, red dragonfly)

とまって いるよ さおの さき
Tomatte iru-yo sao-no saki
(parched being bamboo rod of tip)

とまっているよ 竿の先
(Parched on the tip of a bamboo rod)

Marking

ゆるく おだやかに

Slowly calmly

- This song was first published as a Dōyō (children's song).
- Each line of the poem is in 8-5 or 7-5 mode.
- Letter *g* in "kokago" is a soft and nasal [ŋ] sound.
- Letter *g* in "jūgo" is a hard [g] sound because it is a number (5).