

Tianchi Lake

The Mountain Goats

Children by the water banks
Laughing long and loud
Changbai's high, fine western peaks
Just beneath the clouds

Currents in the water
Churning in their course
Body of a sea lion
Head just like a horse

Preacher in the soft, brown sand
Begins to speak his peace
High wings in the treetops
Low flying winter geese

No one taking pictures
Everybody still
And then the water sought its course again
The way that waters will

No one at the lakeside now
Moon up in the sky
Night birds in the dragon spruce
Moaning long and high

Backstroking on the surface
Moonlight on its face
Floats the Tianchi monster
Staring into space

Out around the temple now
Narcissus in bloom
Sensors packed with sandalwood
Send smoke into the room

Children in the sand outside
On their hands and knees
Sketching pictures all day long
Of stranger things than these