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Bamboo

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BAMBOO

Today I laid a path of broken
blue stones in the garden,
Bear Creek basalt
quarried from the ribs
of a mountain near here.

The stones draw an arc through the garden,
and inside the crescent
the young *sasa vecheii* grows
in a patch of good soil
where I mean it to flourish.

Where two months ago
I knelt one gray morning
and coaxed tender starts
from their plastic containers,
laid each one
in a dark, scented hollow
scooped from the earth, as if from a grave,
and abandoned it there
with its roots in the mud,
to enter paradise
all on its own.

Already the fierce bamboo
sends its nocturnal shoots
nosing through the damp clay.
I saw the blind, bloodless wands of new growth
when I dug the trenches for my stones
earlier today.

One day I'll look from the window to see

a thousand green leaves held aloft,
their tender palms turned toward the sky—
saying, This is the body, the blood,
here, where flesh comes down
into fresh earth, where water
comes down.