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Bamboo Yards at Kyōbashi

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Bamboo Yards at Kyōbashi

Along the great wooden bridge at Kyōbashi
the pilgrims straggle home

footsore, quiet now, and sleepy

The city's cache of bamboo
is sufficient, their prayers have been confident

The future is assured

They are alive
They are safe, even happy

The moon rises without comment
over the steep ramparts and spires

of bundled bamboo

For the laborer below, moonlight
is only more light to work by

He poles his barge along the bright river

What he thinks, no one asks
What he thinks falls away as smoothly

as the runnel of river water

that slides down the pole he lifts
holds aloft for a moment

then sinks into the shining river

(*Ando Hiroshige, woodblock print from
One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*)