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The sweep of Japanese literature in all its great variety was made available to Western readers for the first time in this anthology. Every genre and style, from the celebrated No plays to the poetry and novels of the seventeenth century, find a place in this book. An introduction by Donald Keene places the selections in their proper historical context, allowing the readers to enjoy the book both as literature and as a guide to the cultural history of Japan. Selections include “Man’yōshū” or “Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves” from the ancient period; “Kokinshū” or “Collection of Ancient and Modern Poetry,” “The Tosa Diary” of Ki No Tsurayuki, “Yugao” from “Tales of Genji” of Murasaki Shikibu, and “The Pillow Book” of Sei Shōnagon from the Heian Period; “The Tale of the Heike” from the Kamakura Period; Plan of the No Stage, “Birds of Sorrow” of Seami Motokiyo, and “Three Poets at Minase” from the Muromachi Period; and Sections from Bashō, including “The Narrow Road of Oku,” “The Love Suicides at Sonezaki” by Chikamatsu Monzaemon, and Waka and haiku of the Tokugawa Period.

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