

A MAN WHO MET A KING

1. He was sent to meet a king in a land across the sea.
He was an ambassador, that's what they said he'd be.
So he left his wife and children and his home before the spring.
He met a man who wore a crown,
but he didn't meet a king.
2. He crossed two mighty oceans and a desert in between.
He stayed with monks and soldiers, and lonely were his dreams.
He dreamed about his marshland home, and swans upon the wing.
He met a man upon a throne,
but he didn't meet a king.
3. When he arrived he was ignored, his messages unread.
His mission was a failure, all the way he'd been misled.
And though he went to see the man who wore St. Peter's ring,
he saw a man of power and wealth
but he didn't meet a king.
4. And all along the way he saw the thin and ugly man.
He saw him hang on every wall, but he didn't understand
until he reached his home again, and his failure was complete.
Before his death, he met the king
with nails in his hands and feet.
5. "Ah, wretched king, you're like a mangy dog that has no home.
You never leave a beaten man, your pain is like my own.
You stayed so close beside me when I lost everything."

(Last two lines instrumental)

1984 Shusaku Endo, acclaimed Japanese novelist and also a Christian, wrote a novel called The Samurai, set in the late 16th - early 17th century when the fierce persecution of Christians sprang up in Japan. His early working title for the book was A Man Who Met A King. This song is based on the book.