

## Arirang Lament

THERESE YOUNG KIM

Once I was born in the Land of Morning Calm  
where, they say, tigers used to smoke.

Could I ever free myself from the laughable  
state of living where one never utters  
“I love you” even if dying of love,  
which could also mean “I hate you.”

Laughable to say as it may, the story is sung  
in one hundred versions of the folksong,  
Arirang.

Arirang, arirang, ara~ri~yo~~

Trudging away you're o'er the hills of Arirang~  
If you so leave, leaving me forsaken, my love,  
suffer you will from the pain in your legs  
before you make the first li for your journey~

Arirang, arirang, ara~ri~yo~~

So goes the legend, undressing the hearts  
and minds of lovers abandoned and abandoning  
in the peaks and valleys of love – of life.