

By Moon and Star

Be'lakor

Fifteen times the leaves had shorn,
Trode by boy and beast
Kith and kin to fare him well
The youngling parted east

The rite was whet and worn with time,
As sons dared risk unseen
Mere passage had convinced the herd
And none defied routine

Eyes, fixed afar - a trial to come
Now, his suffering - only begun

He journeyed deep into the woods,
And took no drink or food
Desperate to become a man,
'Fore stupor choked his mood

Carrion gloated at each step,
In dreams the evil milled
Doubting every sickened thought
Depraved against his will

Eyes, turn inwards - observe with hate
Now, this suffering - will not abate

Growing weakness in his gait
He slumped beneath the sun
Each bleeding foot began to weep
Skin and bone was one

Rousing with a fitful gasp
He crawled on tattered knees
And bound for home by moon and star
His trial was complete

Staggers carried him to town
His joy was soon to shed
Kith and kin would greet him not
For each one was dead

The sixteenth leaves began to fall
Indifferent, they withstood
Now, a man with nothing left
He turned back for the woods