

# The Fat Geisha Sings The Ballad of the Bamboo Shoot

*by* Jeff Goldberg

Come gather round and listen to me  
You senior VPs from AIG  
As full of yourselves  
As you are of wealth  
So engorged are you with raging greed  
The warnings you neither see nor heed.

Come gather round and listen to me  
Sing of the Minister of the Third Degree.  
Contemplate  
His unfortunate fate  
During the reign of the Emperor Reizei.

Loving not hating, giving not taking  
Should be the rules in both finance and mating.  
Be ever mindful  
To be heartfelt and kindful  
For the best part of you  
Is like tender bamboo.

This Minister of the Third Degree  
Had Mistresses three,  
Who shall be called Lady X, Lady Y, and Lady Z  
In the interests of delicacy.

A large portfolio he possessed  
But lacking in love and tenderness

His Mistresses Three  
Ladies X, Y, and Z  
Were soon consumed by jealousy.

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One stormy night, the Minister of the Third Degree  
Summoned his Mistresses, one, two, three.  
Their jealousy, he'd come to decide  
Arose from a secret desire to spy.

So as they saw him exchange rates with each in turn,  
They would all soon learn  
He had enough currency  
To sate all three.

Lady X was the first he chose, the youngest of all,  
None fairer was there in the Capital.  
Her over his sword stand he bent  
As into her securities his debt instrument went,  
While behind fans blushed Ladies Y and Z,  
But desired their turn secretly.

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After taking his profit from Lady X,  
Lady Y upon his lap he next  
His double-digit growth inserted from behind  
As she giggled and groaned, drunk on rice wine.

But then, as it began to rain,  
Lady Z resisted when her turn came.  
Even as the Minister of the Third Degree  
Plied her dollar roll unmercifully  
With dirty floats and pledged collateral,  
She staunchly remained Bearish to his Bull.  
Yet, alas, even her at last  
To his unfriendly offers acquiesced  
And grabbed for pleasure and gratification  
As they howled in beggar-thy-neighbor devaluation.

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“Well,” said the Minister of the Third Degree  
Have I cured my Ladies of jealousy?”  
His Mistresses three agreed quietly,  
and brought his clothes,  
Lady X his sable mantle, Lady Y his shoes,

And Lady Z his sword in a silver sheath  
As, having spent his equity,  
The Minister placed his soft currency upon a table of sweet  
meats,  
Laden with warmed spiced cheese, lotus-seed tarts and other  
treats,

And moaned, "Whatever shall I do?  
There's only one of him and three of you."

In an instant all was made clear,  
As Lady Z raised his sword in the air  
And brought it down deftly in three neat strokes  
Severing his assets in twain like a bamboo shoot.  
Then, as he screamed most piteously,  
Calmly answered Lady Z,  
"A fairer dispersement could never be."

So, come and listen to me,  
You Senior VPs from AIG  
However skillful with mammon you may be  
Remember the Minister of the Third Degree  
And from deluded self-pride and greed desist  
Lest you receive a stock split you won't cherish.

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