Nami-ko, a young woman of a noble Japanese family, has recently married the naval officer Takeo, the only heir of a friend of her father's. The couple is very happy together and Takeo is doing everything to create the perfect life for his wife, even more so when she contracts tuberculosis. Takeo's mother, however, sees Nami's illness as a threat to the survival of the family line. Egged on by Chijiwa, a spurned lover of Nami's and Takeo's cousin, she uses her son's absence to send Nami back to her family, thus effecting a divorce. Upon his return, Takeo is furious, but, unable to undo the divorce, he goes off to the front line in the war with China. Meanwhile, Nami is getting worse, and her only wish is to be able to see Takeo one more time...

This is the best known novel by Kenjiro (pen-name: Roka) Tokutomi. Written in 1899 as Hototogisu (The Cuckoo), it deals with the life of the upper classes in the early years after the Meiji Restoration, when Japan was torn between ancient traditions and modern Western influences. The novel was translated several times soon after its publication. This translation is by Sakae Shioya and E. F. Edgett from 1904.

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Total running time 7:23:40

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