

(speaks) If it weren't for you two . . . (sings again)

Who would be willing to get drunk three times on the Yueh-yang Tower?

(exits)

KUO: This man must be a crazy Taoist monk. For no reason at all, he gave me a sword and told me to kill my wife. How could I ever do it? Well, I might as well take this sword home. It'll be very useful for cutting vegetables. Again I've wasted a whole day on account of him. I might as well go home.

(exits)

ACT III

KUO: (enters) The Taoist priest has given me a sword, and I took it home. By midnight, someone had killed my wife. I don't know who did it. On the sword is written . . .

Visiting North Sea in the morning, rest at the Ts'ang-wu at night.⁵⁹

With my sword sheathed in my sleeve, my courage surges high. I was drunk three times at Yueh-yang Tower, yet no one recognized me.

Chanting aloud, I soar above the Tung-t'ing Lake.

And on the back of the sword is written, "by Tung-pin." I'm going to report this to the head of the street before I report to the officials. (walks a few steps) Here is the home of the head of the street. Let me try to rouse him. (calls) Is the head of the street home?

HEAD OF STREET: (enters) Who is at the door? I'd better open the door and look. (looks around)

KUO: Head of the street, greetings. Yesterday a crazy Taoist, whose name is not known, gave me a sword, and I took it home. By midnight someone killed my wife. Inscribed on the sword are those lines:

I visit the North Sea in the morning, rest at the Ts'ang-wu at night.

With my sword sheathed in my sleeve, my courage soars high.

I was drunk three times at Yueh-yang, yet no one recognized me.

Chanting aloud, I soar above the Tung-t'ing Lake.

And on the back of the sword is written, "by Tung-pin."

HEAD OF STREET: Was your wife murdered?

KUO: Yes, she was murdered.

HEAD OF STREET: So she was murdered. What damn business has it got to do with me?

KUO: You are in charge of this street. If I don't report to you, to whom should I speak?

HEAD OF STREET: Ma-erh, let me see. You said that "by Tung-pin" was inscribed on the sword. Therefore, this sword is made of *pin* iron from some cave.⁶⁰ That's the guy who killed your wife.

KUO: I don't think so.

HEAD OF STREET: If not, then what would you say?

KUO: I think you and I should report this to the local official and ask him for a warrant authorizing us to search the street for that Taoist monk. Whoever chants those lines would be the one who murdered my wife.

HEAD OF STREET: You're right.

KUO: (reciting a doggerel)

I will ferret him out,

Before the officials can arrest him.

HEAD OF STREET: (also reciting a doggerel)

Even if we find that Taoist,

He can't replace your ugly wife. (both exit)

LU: (enters with drum and drumsticks; recites a verse)

Arrayed in a straw raincoat and wearing a bamboo-leaf hat,

I am afraid to search for my Taoist friend.

With my sticks and the drum in hand.

Leisurely I look at the Central Plain.

Beat a while, rest a while,

I'll refresh people's ears and eyes.

Read a while, sing a while,

I'll moisten my own throat.

Enter wine shops and visit tea houses.

I have to tie firmly the horse of ideas.⁶¹

Trampling over the red dust, climbing the Purple Terrace,

I fasten tightly my monkey's mind.⁶²

Riding a colorful crane, I'll fly to the west of the Western Heaven;