

*Once your breath does not come back,
You would be like fallen catkins stuck to mud.
While in my cavern, the cranes arrive early before the guest.
When autumn is over, leaves fall late, without frost.
Which is more advantageous?*

(speaks) Ma-erh, why do you stop me right in the middle of the street?

KUO: Why did you murder my wife? Now I have found you, what do you have to say?

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Tao-tao-ling*)

*Because of that old thing,
In the mirror you have added white hair.
Being boiled like an iron pot, you have a bellyful of steamy sighs.
You could push your old master into a barren countryside.
But that lewd woman of yours slept in other's arms.
If we don't kill her, what then?
If we don't kill her, what then?
How can anyone be like me, dream of Duke Chou, and sleep
'til the sun is high?*

KUO: You can't deny it. I'm going to sue you.

LÜ: With what are you going to arrest me?

KUO: With this warrant.

LÜ: Where is your warrant? (Kuo shows him the document) Read it to me.

KUO: (reads) "By the order of the officials of the district: arrest immediately a *murderer*, a certain Taoist monk." Isn't that you?

LÜ: Let me see it. (Kuo gives him the document)

LÜ: (making magic gestures) Quick, (the document changes) Read it again. Then you can arrest whoever is named there.

KUO: All right. Whoever it is should be arrested. (reads) "By the order of the officials of the district: arrest a murderer named Kuo Ma-erh." (frightened) How come my name is written on this document?

LÜ: (sings—tune of *T'ang-hsiu-t s'ai*)

*I don't believe the judge dares to convict anyone.
Because you are so foolish; I am here to get you.
I have a hundred-word monument to control my mind;
But you, a stupid, stubborn thing; how could you get there?*
(in the tune of *Kun-hsiu-ch'iu*)
At my place the white clouds float at will.

Divine cranes follow me around.

My cavern door is never closed.

KUO: Sir, I am afraid my wife is there?

LÜ: (sings)

Don't you every mention that you have a virtuous wife at home.

KUO: Teacher, what is that place?

LÜ: (speaks) Ma-erh, take a look. (again sings)

On this side stands the loom of the Weaving Girl.⁶⁴

On the other side is the cave of the Jade Maiden.⁶⁵

How can you dispose of wine, sex, money and temper?

Did those who seen you off say that you should feel peace at heart?

You are a thousand-year-old willow tree by the road of the Red Dust,⁶⁶

You saw a plum tree in front of the White Jade Hall.

HO: (enters)

KUO: (sees her) Isn't that my wife?

LÜ: (making magic gestures) Quickly! (Ho exits)

KUO: Sir, where did my wife go? She was here just a moment ago. How come she disappeared?

LÜ: (sings)

How could you understand the mystery of this?

KUO: I was not so sure that you would kill my beautiful wife. Call her out and return her to me.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Pan-tu-shu*)

You say your wife is pretty, with natural beauty.

You also say that you are a couple as young as bamboo shoots.

Indeed, who sent you two to match as a couple?

Today who separates your fragrant joint-roots?

Why can't you understand the mystery of this?

You still believe you are a young husband and wife.

KUO: You have hidden my wife. How can I let you go free? (to Head of Street) Head of Street, help me arrest him to see the officials.

HEAD OF STREET: The warrant indeed orders me to help you arrest the Taoist monk, I'll help, I'll help you.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Hsiao-ho-shang*)

I, I, I, I want your wife? What for?

You, you, you arrest me? What for?

How dare, how dare, how dare you rely on the authority of