

peared.

5. According to a Chinese legend, there was a kingdom in ancient times in the Shu district (today's Szechwan Province). The king was named Tu Yü, and his official title was King Wang. When his kingdom suffered a flood disaster, he gave his throne to his prime minister, K'ai-ming, he himself went to the western hills where he lived as a recluse. After Tu Yü died, his soul became a bird, which was named after him and is also known as Tzu-kui, namely, the cuckoo bird.
6. Tsou Yen came from the Ch'i State in the period of the Warring States. King Chao of the Yen State built a palace for Tsou and respected him as a teacher. After the death of King Chao, King Hui succeeded to the throne. Trusting a flatterer's accusation, King Hui put Tsou into prison. Because of his innocence snow fell during the hot summer months.
7. According to a legend, during the Han Dynasty, there was a widow in Tunghai named Chou Ch'ing. She was very filial to her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law committed suicide by hanging. Chou Ch'ing was wrongly accused of murder. Before she was executed, she pointed to the long pole on the carriage and said, "If I am guilty, my blood would fall down after the execution. Otherwise, the blood would flow upward along this bamboo pole." After execution, her blood indeed flew up the pole. The Tunghai district suffered drought for 3 years. Later a magistrate named Yü helped clear her name. Then rain fell.

ACT IV

1. The ten serious crimes include: revolt, rebellion, uprising, opposition to authorities, unruly, disrespectful, unfilial, disharmony against relatives, unrighteousness, civil disobedience.
2. According to Chinese superstition, there was a Home-Viewing Tower in the Hades, where the spirit of the dead could see their homes.
3. According to Buddhist belief, the "Sea of Bitterness" refers to the human world where man is subjected to all kinds of bitterness and suffering, such as birth, old age, ill health and death. The only way to save oneself from suffering in the human world is to attain that spiritual freedom and self enlightenment that comes through rigid self-discipline as outlined in the teachings of Buddha. The only other escape is death itself.
4. In Chinese architectural design, most buildings, especially government offices, are designed to be built with the main entrance or gate facing south.
5. The water and land ceremonials are referred as the Buddhist ceremonies or Taoist rituals in which sacrifices were presented to the gods and spirits in waters as well as on land. It is usually called the Water and Land Sacrifice.
6. Nine Springs (Yellow Springs) is another name for Hades, a legendary place for dead.

The Yueh-yang Tower

岳陽樓

by

Ma Chih-quan

馬致遠

呂洞賓三醉岳陽樓



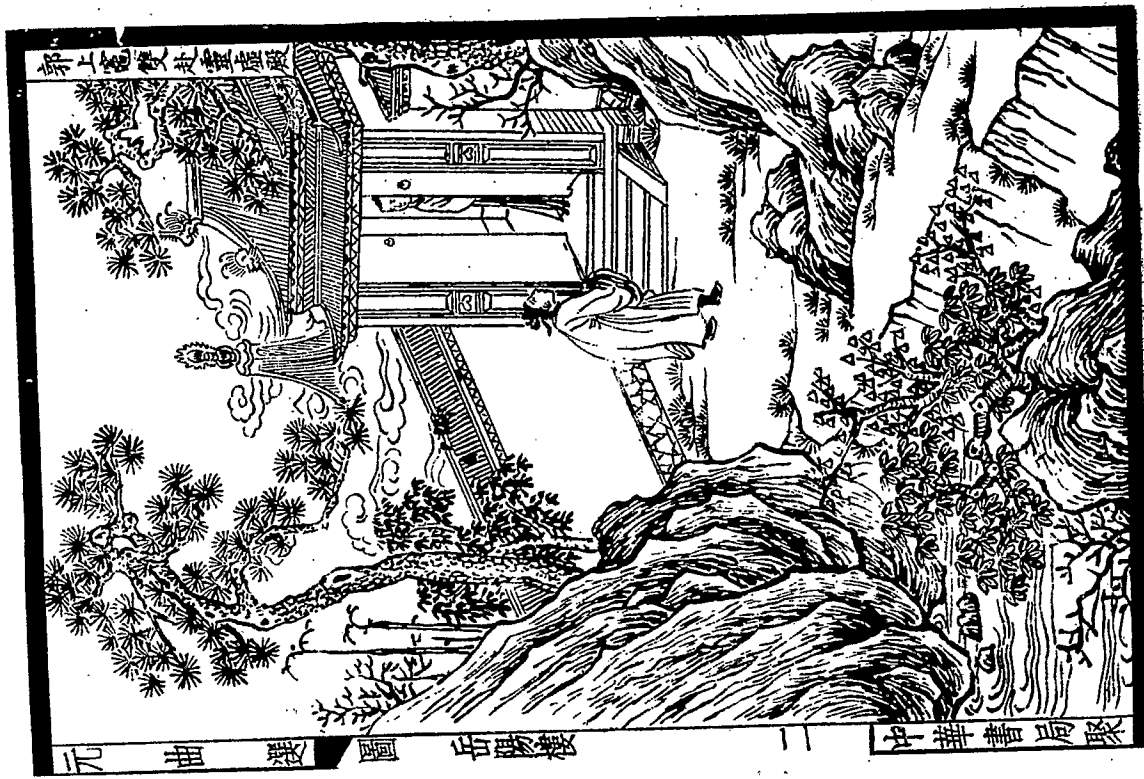


徐神翁斜纜釣魚舟

做戴安道筆

元曲選圖 岳陽樓

中華書局聚



郭上憲雙赴靈虛殿

元曲選

圖 岳陽樓

中書書局

PERSONS IN THE DRAMA:

- Wineshop Operator**
The owner of a wine shop in the Yüeh-yang Tower
- Lü Tung-pin (the main role)**
A Taoist immortal, whose Taoist title is Ch'un-yang-tzu, and his given name was Yen.
- The Willow Spirit (Kuo Ma-erh)**
The spirit of a willow tree; later takes human form as Kuo-Ma-erh, owner of the tea house in the Yüeh-yang Tower
- Hó La-mei (the plum spirit)**
The spirit of a plum tree; later takes form as a woman and wife of Kuo Ma-erh
- Head of Street**
A city official
- An Official**
An official in Yüeh-yang Tower area
- Chung-li of Han, Li, Lan Ts'ai-ho, Chang-kuo-lao, Hsü Shen-weng, Han Hsiang-tzu, and Ts'ao Kuo-chiu**
A group of immortals in disguise—assistants to Lü Tung-pin in the transformation of the willow spirit
- Clerks and attendants**

ACT I

The scene is a wine shop in the Yüeh-yang Tower overlooking the Yangtze River in the Yüeh-chou district (of Hunan Province). It is early morning.

WINE CLERK: (enters, reciting a jingle)

My wine is pure clear.

A string of cash can buy two bottles.

It may fill up one's stomach.

It makes one's penis urinate painfully.

(speaks) I am a wine shop operator. My shop is located in the Yüeh-yang Tower. Everyone, whether from the north or south, merchant or traveler, seller or buyer, would stop at the tower to drink. This morning, I got the wine warmed up, and the shop sign hanged up. (calls out) Customers, wine is ready—ready.

LÜ TUNG-PIN: (enters, carrying a basket of ink sticks) Your humble Taoist is Lu Yen. Another name is Tung-pin, with a Taoist title—Ch'un yang-tzu. I was a Confucian scholar of the T'ang Dynasty. Later, I met my teacher, Chung¹, through whose help and enlightened persuasion, I was able to achieve the Tao of immortality. While feasting at the P'an T'ao Festival,¹ suddenly I noticed a streak of blue air coming up from the world underneath. It means that an immortal has emerged. When I took another look, it is located in the Yüeh-yang district of Yüeh-chou. I'll ride the clouds and descend there, disguised as a scholar selling ink-sticks. (calls out) You people on the street come and buy my good ink-sticks. (sings—tune of *Tien-chiang-ch'un*, in the mode of *Hsien-lü*)

The lustre of this ink shines in a study room.

Its soot was gathered on the T'ai-hua Mountain, on the Fairy's Palm.²

Further, made by the five Lis and three Changs,³

When it enters an ink-slab,

It makes sounds like wind in pines.

(in the tune of *Hun-chiang-lung*)

Shaped like a shuttle's head or a lute, it could aid a poetic brush,

By the window, bright and clear, for studying books.

I just passed through a Taoist temple, several fasting halls ...

The bamboo desks, have secretly taken on the lustre of the

*Dragon's Tail.*⁴

*A plain cloth robe often brings forth the fragrance of musk.
Now I have come to the shore of the Tung-t'ing Lake,
The side of the hundred-foot tall tower.*

(goes up the tower; speaks) What a fine tall tower this is!
(sings again)

*It leans against cloud and sky,
Reflects on the rivers Hsiao and Hsiang.
Here I climb up the flying ladder,
Gaze my eyes.
It seems thirty thousand feet from the mortal world,
Good for Kao Huan to keep himself cool from heat,⁵
And for Wang Ts'an's thinking of home.⁶*

CLERK: I will stand at the door and see who comes here.

LÜ: (sings—tune of Yü-hu-lu)

I can see twelve balustrades linking with the sky.

CLERK: (calls out) Customers, come and taste my wine.

LÜ: Don't shout!

CLERK: Why do you tell me to stop shouting?

LÜ: (again singing)

*I feel you may frighten the Jade Emperor.⁷
Who would then permit you to build a brewery near the Big
Dipper?*

CLERK: Can't you see the sign hanging on the tower and the characters written on the sign? It reads, "In the world there is no other wine; under the sky there is this famous tower."

LÜ: (continues singing)

*It is written: the Yüeh-yang Tower is strategically important
and majestically beautiful.
In addition, the Spring of Tung-t'ing⁸, a good wine is newly
warmed.*

CLERK: Sir, take a look at the magnificent scenery on this side.

LU: (sings)

With waves rolling below, it overlooks the River Han.

CLERK: Not only the Han River, even the Tung-t'ing lake, the Po-yang lake, and the Ch'ing-ts'ao lake can also be seen.

LÜ: It is just the season when chickens are fat and crabs strong.⁹
(sings again)

It is the chrysanthemums of autumn, it would not intoxicate

*T'ao Yuan-liang.*¹⁰

CLERK: Sir, you have come too late, I have sold all my wine. No more is left.

LÜ: Did you say there is no more wine?

(sings again)

What can I do with those round-naveled, pregnant crabs?¹¹

CLERK: I have some wine here. What can you pay me with?

LÜ: I have no money, but . . .

(sings—tune of T'ien-hsia-lo)

I could pawn my jade belt for a drink.

CLERK: In that case, I really have no more wine.

LÜ: You said no more wine. Can't you smell it?

(sings again)

What is that so pure, sweet, smooth, hot and fragrant?

CLERK: All right, there is wine. But if you get drunk, you won't be able to get down the stairs.

LÜ: (sings)

*Even you could make you old master drunk to death, he
won't ask you to pay for his life.*

CLERK: Sir, it is very chilly on this tower.

LÜ: It is still early. (sings)

*How could you know that the days and months of us immortals
are long?*

(speaks) Waiter, what deity do you worship?

CLERK: This is the first wine maker, Tu K'ang. Because I worship him, customers fill my shop everyday.

LÜ: (sings—tune of No-cha-ling)

*I'll get for you, Po-yang, the immortalized,¹²
And the pot-hanging Ch'ang-fang,¹³*

*For they are much better than the profit-making Tu K'ang
whom you worship.*

CLERK: Sir, I buy fresh fish as an appetizer.

LÜ: (sings)

*Don't talk about the golden scaled fish and new brewed wine,
To lure those passing merchants or travelers.*

(in tune of Ch'üeh-t'a-chih)

*Since the Sui and the T'ang, there have been several rises and
falls.*

*Think about this black banner. . . .
How many days can it have in the autumn?
Facing these majestic mountains and rivers in all directions,
Could they last longer than the lives of my drunken words?*

CLERK: Sir, my wine is better than both nectar and Jade Liquid.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Chi-sheng-ts'ao*)

*Say nothing of the nectar or jade liquid.
I think phoenixes and cranes fly over the autumn river.
Like whales I would drink up the waves of the Silver River.¹⁴
Drinking the lamb wine I would get drunk in the golden-lined
curtains.¹⁵*

*It is like Monk Fo-yin who roasted a pig to entertain Tung-p'ò.¹⁶
It is better than Wei Yeh's riding on a mule to meet P'an Lang.¹⁷*

CLERK: I have heard many stories—of Wang Hung's giving a gift, of
Liu Ling's bringing his shovel, of Li Po's fishing of the moon—but
none of them was as fond of wine as you.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Yao-p'ien*)

*For those mortal ones were like walls made of mud and
manure.*

*Wang Hung visited a friend, peering through the edge,¹⁸
Li Po fished for the moon and drowned in a river.¹⁹
Liu Ling carried his shovel behind for digging a grave with.²⁰
But I will sing aloud, flying over the Tung-t'ing Lake. . .
And would not crack my whip entering P'ing-K'ang Lane by
mistake²¹*

(speaks) Waiter, bring me two hundred coins worth of wine.

CLERK: You give me the money first. Then you can have your wine.

LÜ: You are right. I will give you this ink-stick for two hundred
coins worth of wine.

CLERK: You're not kidding me. This ink-stick? What so good about
it? How can it be worth two hundred coins?

LÜ: This ink is no ordinary ink-stick. It is worth more than two
hundred coins. (sings—tune of *Hou-t'ing-hua*)

*This thin ink-stick weighs no more than four ounces,
Yet, how many times can you grind it?
All things are like this.*

(speaks) Oh, wine clerk. . . (again sings).

*Throughout your drifting life, you will busy yourself in vain,
But its black heart dwells on merit and fame.^{21a}*

CLERK: I do not want this ink. Give me money.

LÜ: You refuse to exchange wine for this ink-stick?
(sings again)

Then you have muddled on half a sheet of paper.²²

CLERK: (aside) He is a man of a different world. Why can't I do
some good? I'll take his ink, and I can use it for keeping my
records. Well, I might as well give him two hundred coins worth
of wine. (to Lü) Sir, I will give you the wine. If you can't drink
it yourself, you should invite a few Taoist friends to drink with
you.

LÜ: You are right, waiter. Watch, I will invite some friends for a drink.
(making a magic gesture) Quickly, come! Come here!

CLERK: Where?

LÜ: Quickly! You too. . . and you!

CLERK: (aside) You see, this man must be mad.

LÜ: One dances, one sings, one pours. I will not return until I get drunk.

CLERK: (aside) I said the man is crazy—surely he is. He swings his
sleeves to the east, saying, "come here!" Then he swings his
sleeves to the west saying, "You too!" Then he said, "One dances,
one sings, and one pours."

Where are these people?

LÜ: I don't think you can see them.

(sings—tune of *Chin-chan-erh*)

*Here I lean on the couch gazing at the three Hsiangs.²³
There are yellow cranes dancing in pairs; and fairies singing.
The host is generous. Drunkenness is no matter.
I shall drink until the furled screen summons the bright moon.
And a feast is offered with red-dressed girls in company.
A jug (of wine) would detain an ink-seller.*

(speaks) I am sleepy. (again singing)

I'll dream of the yellow millet.²⁴

(falls asleep)

CLERK: Well, I knew you couldn't drink up two hundred coins worth
of wine yourself. When I suggested you invite a few Taoist friend
to drink with you, you did not listen. Now you are indeed drunk
(murmurs) He is asleep. What shall I do? There are many ghouls
on this tower at night. What if they should harm him? What
shall I do? I'd better wake him up.

(calling Lü) Sir, wake up! There are many spirits and ghosts

this tower. They might harm your life. (Lü does not wake) He is fast asleep. . . I can't awaken him. What shall I do? I think I'll go downstairs, put away the heating pot, pull down the sign and put up the shutters. Then I'll go back up again and wake him up. (to Lü) Hey, you! If you do not wake up, the evil spirits will come here and devour you up. I cannot be responsible. I'm leaving. (exits)

WILLOW SPIRIT: (enters, reciting a poem)

My roots and my trunk are grown in full maturity.

Green leaves and soft twigs fill the branches.

Since I have gathered an abundance of virtuous merits,

The Supreme Ruler has entitled me the River Guardian.

(speaks) I am an old willow tree. I have lived beside the Yüeh-yang Tower for hundreds of years. The white plum tree spirit in front of the Tu K'ang Temple haunts this place. I think I should go upstairs to patrol around. Do you know why? I fear she might harm people. It is getting late now. I had better go up and look around. (going up the tower) Strange! Usually, when I come up here I felt peace in my heart. Why do I feel so apprehensive today? Since I have come this far, should I go back? I might as well go up and see. (seeing Lü) Ah! No wonder, a Superior Immortal is here. I should avoid him. (starts away)

LÜ: (shouts, and stops the willow spirit) Hey, you! Where are you going? Come back!

WILLOW SPIRIT: Had I know that your worship was here, I would have welcomed you. Now I have failed in welcoming you, I can only beg your forgiveness.

LÜ: Oh! What a pity!

(sings—tune of *Tsui-chung-t'ien*)

I see he supports himself with a long cane,

He looks just like the Old Dragon-King.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Had I known earlier that your worship was here, I would have bowed to you.

LÜ (sings)

With your crooked back, and a camel-like waist,

What do you come here for?

(speaks) Let me see your original form.

(sings again) *Here, I lean on the railing to see.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your Worship, what are you looking for?

(sings again)

Actually you are the old willow where the sign hangs in front of the door.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your servant has been here for hundreds of years.

LÜ: Shut up! (sings again)

Don't you say your roots are buried ten thousand feet deep.

Now your catkins have touched mud.

I fear you have betrayed the presence of spring.

(speaks) Willow, you have several shortcomings.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your Worship, what do you mean?

LÜ: (sings—tune of *I-wang-sun*)

The evening breeze was chilly in the camp of Ya-fu,²⁵

The spring days were long in the palace of Emperor Yang,²⁶

After the dance, the persons on the Ch'u Terrace suffered hunger.²⁷

You busy yourself only for spring.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Any other bad points?

LÜ: (sings)

You had starved the palace maids of the Ch'u so much that their waists were as thin as an incense stick.²⁸

(speaks) Old willow, the one who haunts the Yüeh-yang Tower is actually you.

WILLOW SPIRIT: It has nothing to do with me. The white plum tree in front of the Tu K'ang Temple is one that causes all the trouble here.

LÜ: Let me see. Indeed, it is the white plum tree that haunts this place. Very well, old Willow, you follow me. And I will take you out of this world.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your Worship, I cannot go.

LÜ: Why can't you go?

WILLOW SPIRIT: My trunk and roots are firm and strong; my branches and leaves thick and luxuriant. I cannot leave.

LÜ: Though he is a creature of earth and wood, he speaks good words.

(sings—tune of *Chin-chai-erh*)

I, Lü Ch'un-yang, can deliver you, a green willow.

But you would want to accompany smoke and rain over the river bridge,

Dancing in the east wind, floating frivolously around.

Nowadays, people plant their trees in the morning,

Think about this black banner. . . .

How many days can it have in the autumn?

*Facing these majestic mountains and rivers in all directions,
Could they last longer than the lives of my drunken words?*

CLERK: Sir, my wine is better than both nectar and Jade Liquid.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Chi-sheng-ts'ao*)

Say nothing of the nectar or jade liquid.

I think phoenixes and cranes fly over the autumn river.

Like whales I would drink up the waves of the Silver River.¹⁴

*Drinking the lamb wine I would get drunk in the golden-lined
curtains.¹⁵*

It is like Monk Fo-yin who roasted a pig to entertain Tung-p'o.¹⁶

It is better than Wei Yeh's riding on a mule to meet P'an Lang.¹⁷

CLERK: I have heard many stories—of Wang Hung's giving a gift, of Liu Ling's bringing his shovel, of Li Po's fishing of the moon—but none of them was as fond of wine as you.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Yao-p'ien*)

*For those mortal ones were like walls made of mud and
manure.*

Wang Hung visited a friend, peering through the edge,¹⁸

Li Po fished for the moon and drowned in a river.¹⁹

Liu Ling carried his shovel behind for digging a grave with.²⁰

But I will sing aloud, flying over the Tung-t'ing Lake. . .

*And would not crack my whip entering P'ing-K'ang Lane by
mistake²¹*

(speaks) Waiter, bring me two hundred coins worth of wine.

CLERK: You give me the money first. Then you can have your wine.

LÜ: You are right. I will give you this ink-stick for two hundred coins worth of wine.

CLERK: You're not kidding me. This ink-stick? What so good about it? How can it be worth two hundred coins?

LÜ: This ink is no ordinary ink-stick. It is worth more than two hundred coins. (sings—tune of *Hou-t'ing-hua*)

This thin ink-stick weighs no more than four ounces,

Yet, how many times can you grind it?

All things are like this.

(speaks) Oh, wine clerk. . . (again sings)

Throughout your drifting life, you will busy yourself in vain,

But its black heart dwells on merit and fame.^{21a}

CLERK: I do not want this ink. Give me money.

LÜ: You refuse to exchange wine for this ink-stick?

(sings again)

Then you have muddled on half a sheet of paper.²²

CLERK: (aside) He is a man of a different world. Why can't I do some good? I'll take his ink, and I can use it for keeping my records. Well, I might as well give him two hundred coins worth of wine. (to LÜ) Sir, I will give you the wine. If you can't drink it yourself, you should invite a few Taoist friends to drink with you.

LÜ: You are right, waiter. Watch, I will invite some friends for a drink. (making a magic gesture) Quickly, come! Come here!

CLERK: Where?

LÜ: Quickly! You too. . . and you!

CLERK: (aside) You see, this man must be mad.

LÜ: One dances, one sings, one pours. I will not return until I get drunk.

CLERK: (aside) I said the man is crazy—surely he is. He swings his sleeves to the east, saying, "come here!" Then he swings his sleeves to the west saying, "You too!" Then he said, "One dances, one sings, and one pours."

Where are these people?

LÜ: I don't think you can see them.

(sings—tune of *Chin-chan-erh*)

Here I lean on the couch gazing at the three Hsiangs.²³

There are yellow cranes dancing in pairs; and fairies singing.

The host is generous. Drunkenness is no matter.

I shall drink until the furled screen summons the bright moon.

And a feast is offered with red-dressed girls in company.

A jug (of wine) would detain an ink-seller.

(speaks) I am sleepy. (again singing)

I'll dream of the yellow millet.²⁴

(falls asleep)

CLERK: Well, I knew you couldn't drink up two hundred coins worth of wine yourself. When I suggested you invite a few Taoist friends to drink with you, you did not listen. Now you are indeed drunk (murmurs) He is asleep. What shall I do? There are many ghosts on this tower at night. What if they should harm him? What shall I do? I'd better wake him up.

(calling Lü) Sir, wake up! There are many spirits and ghosts on

this tower. They might harm your life. (Lü does not wake) He is fast asleep. . . I can't awaken him. What shall I do? I think I'll go downstairs, put away the heating pot, pull down the sign and put up the shutters. Then I'll go back up again and wake him up. (to Lü) Hey, you! If you do not wake up, the evil spirits will come here and devour you up. I cannot be responsible. I'm leaving. (exits)

WILLOW SPIRIT: (enters, reciting a poem)

*My roots and my trunk are grown in full maturity.
Green leaves and soft twigs fill the branches.
Since I have gathered an abundance of virtuous merits,
The Supreme Ruler has entitled me the River Guardian.*

(speaks) I am an old willow tree. I have lived beside the Yüeh-yang Tower for hundreds of years. The white plum tree spirit in front of the Tu K'ang Temple haunts this place. I think I should go upstairs to patrol around. Do you know why? I fear she might harm people. It is getting late now. I had better go up and look around. (going up the tower) Strange! Usually, when I come up here I felt peace in my heart. Why do I feel so apprehensive today? Since I have come this far, should I go back? I might as well go up and see. (seeing Lü) Ah! No wonder, a Superior Immortal is here. I should avoid him. (starts away)

LÜ: (shouts, and stops the willow spirit) Hey, you! Where are you going? Come back!

WILLOW SPIRIT: Had I know that your worship was here, I would have welcomed you. Now I have failed in welcoming you, I can only beg your forgiveness.

LÜ: Oh! What a pity!
(sings—tune of *Tsui-chung-t'ien*)

*I see he supports himself with a long cane,
He looks just like the Old Dragon-King.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Had I known earlier that your worship was here, I would have bowed to you.

LÜ (sings)
*With your crooked back, and a camel-like waist,
What do you come here for?*

(speaks) Let me see your original form.

(sings again) *Here, I lean on the railing to see.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your Worship, what are you looking for?

(sings again)

*Actually you are the old willow where the sign hangs in front
of the door.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your servant has been here for hundreds of years.

LÜ: Shut up! (sings again)

*Don't you say your roots are buried ten thousand feet deep.
Now your catkins have touched mud.
I fear you have betrayed the presence of spring.*

(speaks) Willow, you have several shortcomings.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your Worship, what do you mean?

LÜ: (sings—tune of *I-wang-sun*)

*The evening breeze was chilly in the camp of Ya-fu,²⁵
The spring days were long in the palace of Emperor Yang,²⁶
After the dance, the persons on the Ch'u Terrace suffered
hunger.²⁷*

You busy yourself only for spring.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Any other bad points?

LÜ: (sings)

*You had starved the palace maids of the Ch'u so much that
their waists were as thin as an incense stick.²⁸*

(speaks) Old willow, the one who haunts the Yüeh-yang Tower is actually you.

WILLOW SPIRIT: It has nothing to do with me. The white plum tree in front of the Tu K'ang Temple is one that causes all the trouble here.

LÜ: Let me see. Indeed, it is the white plum tree that haunts this place. Very well, old Willow, you follow me. And I will take you out of this world.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Your Worship, I cannot go.

LÜ: Why can't you go?

WILLOW SPIRIT: My trunk and roots are firm and strong; my branches and leaves thick and luxuriant. I cannot leave.

LÜ: Though he is a creature of earth and wood, he speaks good words. (sings—tune of *Chin-chai-erh*)

*I, Lü Ch'un-yang, can deliver you, a green willow.
But you would want to accompany smoke and rain over the
river bridge,
Dancing in the east wind, floating frivolously around.
Nowadays, people plant their trees in the morning,*

And wish to enjoy shade during the evening.

I fear you may spawn many small devils

*Who, years later, would leave you an old withered trunk-
behind.*

(speaks) Old Willow, follow me. Leave this world.

WILLOW SPIRIT: I am grateful for your inspired teaching. I am willing to leave this world. But I am a creature of earth and wood. I have not acquired a human form. How can I achieve the Tao of immortality?

LÜ: What you have said is right. You are indeed a creature of earth and wood and have not acquired a human body. Therefore, it would be difficult for you to achieve the Tao. Listen, old willow. You shall go to the Kuo family, the owner of a tea house beneath this tower, and will be born as a boy named Kuo Ma-erh. I shall make the white plum spirit to be born to the Ho family as a girl. Then you two shall become husband and wife. Thirty years from now, I shall return to deliver you. (hands his ink basket to the willow) Carry this for me.

WILLOW SPIRIT: (puts the basket on his head) Is this the way to carry this, Master?

LÜ: No, try again. (the willow tries a second time) Not like that. (to the audience) He is a creature of earth and wood and has not acquired a human body. How could he know? (to the willow) Watch! (Lü takes the basket into his arms and sings again)

Hold fast to this ink basket as I do.

WILLOW SPIRIT: (holding the basket in his arms) Is this all right? Is this the way?

LÜ: (sings) *Indeed he looks like a human being now.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Master, how did you recognize me?

LÜ: (sings) *From the very beginning, I have watched you grow and mature.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Master, where is your home?

LÜ: (sings) *My home is where the white clouds linger.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Is it quiet there?

LÜ: (sings) *There no noisy cicadas bothering the setting sun.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: I will follow you and leave this world. But I can't leave this beautiful water behind.

LÜ: (sings) *This lake scenery is hardly as big as half an acre of a
fragrant pond.*

WILLOW SPIRIT: Master, I think I understand now.

LÜ: (sings) *You almost became a hitching post at the long pavilion.*²⁹

WILLOW SPIRIT: Master; may I dare to ask some questions? What do you mean by conforming to the Tao, or not conforming with the Tao?

LÜ: Ask your questions one at a time.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Master, then what is not conforming to the Tao?

LÜ: (sings) *Not conforming to the Tao is to stand on the Pa-ling
Bridge.*³⁰

WILLOW SPIRIT: Master, what do you mean by conforming to the Tao?

LÜ: (sings) *Conforming to the Tao means you should be at the roadside
of Chang-t'ai.*³¹

(speaks) If you are willing to leave this world with me. I can teach you the one way.

WILLOW SPIRIT: Which one?

LÜ: (sings)

*I will let you learn from the pines and cypresses on the Lü
cliff—to withstand the wind and frost.*³²

(both exit)

ACT II

[Thirty years later. The willow spirit has become Kuo Ma-erh and married the spirit of the plum tree, who became the daughter of the Ho family.]

KUO MA-ERH: (enters with his wife, Ho La-mei; reciting a poem)

The Lung-t'uan and Feng-ping teas are not ordinary,

They are the forerunners of all flowering plants.

Gathered at the summit where snow was still there.

*When brewed, they have the fragrance of Chien-hsi.*³³

(speaks) I am Kuo Ma-erh. This is my wife, Ho La-mei. We operate a tea house under the Yüeh-yang Tower. Merchants and travelers coming from all directions would stop at my shop for tea. I have heard from my old man that thirty years ago this was a wine shop. But now we sell tea. We have been married for several years, but so far have no children. So, I drink all the tea left by the customers. Why? This is called "stealing secret merits to

accumulate my own blessings," so that I may be able to have children. If I could have either a son or a daughter, then the Kuo family would be able to continue with their incense-burning. Today I'll open my shop and have the tea warmed. Yesterday I drank too much wine. I feel a hang-over. (to his wife) Wife, since no one comes yet, I think I'll take a nap in the back room. If anyone comes, let me know.

WIFE: Of course. (Kuo falls asleep) (Lü Tung-pin enters with Hsü Shen-weng)

LÜ: (to Hsü) Hsü Shen-weng, please hold the boat and wait for me here. We shall return together as soon as I have delivered Kuo Ma-erh. (to the audience) In the past, I delivered a willow spirit at the Yüeh-yang Tower. Because he was a creature of earth and wood, he could not achieve the Tao. So I had him to be born as a man. He is now Kuo Ma-erh, the teahouse proprietor under the Yüeh-yang Tower. I had the spirit of the plum tree transformed into a human form; to be born in the Ho family as their daughter to become Kuo's wife. Thirty years have passed now. This man licks up tea left by the people passing by. Nevertheless, as a man of common stock, he needs someone to deliver him. It is said, "Jade, uncarved, cannot become a useful instrument; man, untaught, cannot achieve the Tao." Not to mention about him, even I, once a mere frustrated scholar, went to the Capital to seek an official position and at the Wang-hua Inn in the Han-tan district, I met my teacher, Chung-li, who helped me achieve the Tao, and become an immortal. Had I not met my teacher, Chung-li... (sings-tune of *I-chih-hua*, in the mode of *Nan-lü*)

I would still be riding a bag-bellied mule, and eating several meals of yellow millet.

But today, I have the honor of visiting Lang-yüan,³⁴ and no longer dream of Han-tan.

(speaks) Someone asked, "How could you ever achieve the great Tao of Immortality, while living in drunkenness and dreams?"

(again sings)

Laugh not at my staggering gait, my hypochondria...

Now I have come to the Yüeh-yang Tower twice.

I have heard in vain the frightening crash of waves,

(speaks) Oh, you fools!

(sings again)

For they would not wash clean your foolishness and dumbness.

(speaks) Though I stumble and stagger . . .

(sings again)

Why don't I pretend to be drunk, under the influence of wine?

(speaks) People ask me about human world . . .

(sings again)

Did I ever nod my head acknowledging my understanding of the human world?

Do not laugh at me of my filthy body of wood and earth.

It is far better than the purple robe or the white gown.³⁵

With my sword hidden in my sleeve, the Golden Pill³⁶ in my stomach,

I could revel with all those black temples and rouge faces.³⁷

I have just left the cloudy banners and starry altar.

(speaks) You mortals, do not laugh at us immortals for wandering around . . . (sings again)

I have arrived at the green P'eng-lai where Hsü Fu gathered the divine fungus.³⁸

I just passed over the lofty Wo-hsien-t'ai on Mount Hua where Ch'en T'uan slept,³⁹

And over the magnificent Han-ku Pass of Lao Tzu where the majestic lustre comes from.⁴⁰

Docking my boat, here the tea time on the river tower was just over and the people dispersed.

You, Kuo Shang-tsao,⁴¹ love flattery.

While I, as a beggar, am in a dilemma,

For I come to look for you, a Ch'en Fan who lowered a bed for a friend.⁴²

(looks around for Kuo; speaks) He is not in this room, nor in that room. (sees Kuo) The guy is here. (to Kuo) Hey, Ma-erh, the peach blossoms have faded, yet your willowy eyes are still closed.

(strikes Kuo)

KUO: (surprised) You've scared me. You did not hit my ears, I hope.

LÜ: I hit your ears, all right, but I did not hurt your head. Ma-erh take a look.

KUO: What do you want me to see?

LÜ: Isn't this the bank of the Wu River?

KUO: Where is River Wu?

LÜ: Isn't this the Hua-jung Path?

KUO: Where is the Hua-jung Path?

(Lü weeps, and then laughs)

KUO: (to the audience) This Taoist priest must be a mad man. He asked me, "Isn't this the Wu River? Isn't this the Hua-jung Path?"

Then he weeps and laughs, laughs and weeps. He is really crazy.

LÜ: Where are the heroes of the past now? This side of the Hua-jung Path is the relics of Ts'ao Ts'ao.⁴³ On the bank of the Wu River is King Pa's⁴⁴ old site. Ts'ao Ts'ao, a champion scoundrel, slept on a round pillow by night and gave poisoned wine to others by day.⁴⁵ King Pa, who divided the country into three, possessed earth-shattering bravery and mountain-moving strength. Where they are now? (Sings -- tune of *Huo-hsin-lang*)

Look! The dragons and tigers were fighting for the old land.

KUO: Whom are you laughing at?

LÜ: (sings)

I am laughing at the scoundrel hero, Ts'ao Ts'ao.

KUO: Then who are you crying for?

LÜ: (sings)

I am crying for the heroic King Pa!

KUO: Sir, why do you cry after you laugh, and laugh after you cry?

LÜ: (sings)

For rise and fall, I laugh, then I cry!

Suddenly the sun is again getting late.

The hundred years of a man are really within a snap of fingers.

KUO: I don't mind you enjoying yourself on the tower, but don't disturb my customers.

LÜ: (sings)

I hear the noise of the customers in front of the tower.

How can they compare with the leisure of wild gulls on a river.

Man of a hundred years is but an illusion . . .

(looks around)

KUO: (also looking around) I'll take a look as you do.

LÜ: (sings)

I see that you are a golden-threaded willow.

You still lean leisurely against twelve jade bannisters.

KUO: Sir, what do you come here for?

LÜ: I come here to beg a cup of tea from you.

KUO: To beg for a cup of tea you surely used nice sweet words. Well, for a man out of this world, I can always do some service. (to his wife) Wife, make some tea for this priest.

LÜ: I will not drink tea that way. You must follow my instructions. Come, make me a deep bow and say, "May I ask you, my dear sir, what kind of tea you desire?" Then I will tell you the name of the tea.

KUO: (to the audience) Did you see that? I see that he is not a man of this world, so I was nice to him and gave him some tea. But I never expected he is so fussy. Well, all right, I'll follow his instructions. Anyway, there aren't many customers now. He is crazy, and I am silly. We might as well play a little game. I will obey him, and make a deep bow. (to Lü) May I ask you, sir, what kind of tea do you desire?

LÜ: I'd like a quince tea.

KUO: Good Heavens! What a big mouth! Open your mouth a little wider, and you might dislocate your jaw! I asked, "What kind of tea do you desire?" He says, "I'd like a quince."

LÜ: Whom are you imitating, Kuo Ma-erh?

KUO: I'm imitating you.

LÜ: You would be doing all right if you could imitate me.

KUO: If I imitated you, I would have a dumb head the rest of my life. (to his wife) Wife, make some quince. (Lü drinks the tea) Give me the cup.

LÜ: I will not give you the cup.

KUO: Why don't you give me the cup?

LÜ: You must follow my instructions again. Make a deep bow and say, "May I ask you, my dear sir, how is the taste of the tea?" Then I will give you the cup.

KUO: All right, all right. I will obey. Say no more. My dear sir, I bow to you. How is the taste of the tea?

LÜ: The tea is no good.

KUO: That's just fine! You make a fine advertisement.

LÜ: For that you should be punished.

KUO: Why punish me?

LÜ: Ask me the proper way.

KUO: O.K. I bow to you. My dear sir, what kind of tea do you desire?

LÜ: I'd like a cream tea.

KUO: What a tight lip. I asked him, "My dear sir, what kind of tea do you desire?" And he says, "I'd like a cream tea." First he drank a quince. Second, he asks for a cream tea. The guy has a small mouth, and then a big mouth.⁴⁶

LÜ: Kuo Ma-erh, I do have a small mouth and a big mouth.

KUO: A big mouth and a small mouth makes the character *Lü*. Add another mouth and the character is *p'in*, which means my tea is of excellent quality.⁴⁷ (to his wife) In that case, wife, make a cream tea for the priest.

LÜ: (takes the tea) Kuo Ma-erh, is this real cream in the tea?

KUO: What else could it be but real cream in the tea?

LÜ: It's goat's-fat.

KUO: Goats' fat is used for candles. Where could I get goats' fat?

LÜ: If you would light like a candle, there would be plenty of goats' fat.⁴⁸

KUO: The way you talk, I must be a willow tree. (Lü drinks) Give me your cup.

LÜ: I will not give you the cup. You must ask me in the proper manner.

KUO: O.K. O.K. Sir, how is the taste of the tea?

LÜ: It is still no good.

KUO: This is the second time!

LÜ: You should be punished again. Come on! Ask me the same way as before.

KUO: O.K. Sir, what kind of a tea do you desire to drink?

LÜ: I will have an almond tea.

KUO: This guy really has taste. First he drank quince; then he drank cream tea. Now he wants almond tea. With some dry food given him, and he will be full for half a day.

LÜ: If it hadn't been for me, Ma-erh, you would have become a dry beam.⁴⁹

KUO: It seems I am just a block of wood. All right, all right. (to his wife) My dear, make an almond tea for the priest.

WIFE: I have almonds, but no boards.

KUO: (to Lü) Sir, we have almonds, but no boards.

LÜ: Did you say you have almonds but no boards? Thirty years ago, if you were cup up, there would have been plenty of boards.⁵⁰

KUO: Sir, I can't stand your saying one sentence after another. Wife, make an almond tea. (Lü drinks the tea) Give me the cup.

LÜ: I will not give you the cup. You should ask for it the same way as

before.

KUO: O.K. Sir, how is the taste of the tea?

LÜ: Kuo Ma-erh, this tea of yours . . .

KUO: Still no good, right?

LÜ: How did you guess?

KUO: I am learning your ways.

LÜ: I want you to learn my *Way*.⁵¹ (Kuo licks the tea cup) Kuo Ma-erh, I have seen you lick it.

KUO: Lick what?

LÜ: Lick the bottom of the cup. Why?

KUO: Sir, you wouldn't know. My wife, Ho La-mei, and I have been married for several years. But we have no children. All merchants and travelers, whether from the north or south, buying or selling would come up my tower for tea. I drink the left-over tea. Do you know why? This is called stealing secret merits to accumulate my own blessings. Should we have a boy or girl, the Kuo family would have someone to continue burning the incense.

LÜ: Oh, I see. What would you say if I help you accumulate more secret merits?

KUO: That will be better.

LÜ: Get me a cup, Kuo Ma-erh. Drink up the tea I throw out. It will make you have a son. (Lü throws out the tea from his mouth)

KUO: (does not drink the tea; to the audience) When I take a look at his dirty face, I would rather be without heirs than drink his tea. Let me play his game and see what he has to say. (to Lü) Sir, if you eat the food I have left over, I will drink your tea.

LÜ: Then bring me your left-over food.

(Sings -- tune of *Wu-T'ung-shu*)

You said two cups of tea would make one perspire all over.

Have you not heard that one grain of rice can pass through the bowel three times?

Who cares about won-ton skin, bun stuffings or leftover rice . .

Whenever there's food or wine, the teacher would eat.

(vomits again)

KUO: Oh, it's so dirty!

LÜ: If you drink my leftover tea, I'll eat your leftover food.

KUO: I'll tell you. I won't drink your tea and you need not eat my food. Wearing that half-piece of goatskin, you look as foul as a beggar.

LU: (sings—tune of *Ke-wei*)

*Don't you laugh at this beggar wearing a goatskin,
You, the leader of beggars, don't mistake it as a bedding sheet.*

(speaks) Ma-erh, I have drank three cups of tea. Not one was real.

KUO: How come "not one was real?"

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Ke-wei*)

*I'll throw up the date in the quince, the fat in the cream, the
pit in the almond.*

(speaks) Ma-erh, you eat them.

KUO: I can't eat.

LÜ: (sings)

It seems so difficult for him.

(speaks) Ma-erh, eat!

KUO: Really, I can't eat.

LÜ: If you don't eat, then take the cup. (Lü teases Kuo by pretending to drop the cup) Alas, I almost broke the cup!

KUO: You scared me to death!

LÜ: (sings again)

I'll see how you dispose of this pine-wind-rabbit-hair cup.

(speaks) Ma-erh, Look! What a vomit I have made . . .

(Sings—tune of *Mu-yang-kuan*)

*This vomit, unlike a bamboo-leaf floating on cloud waves;
Nor like a stone-block churning up snow-like waves.*

*This vomit, with my mouth opened, has dispersed the fragrance
inside the screen.*

With its sacred wine, it would lengthen life,

And it keeps a peach-like face youthful.

One does not need to gather snow on Meng's Peak;

Or to make tea in a cuckoo-bird cup.⁵²

It is like the water one draws from the Yang-tze River.

(speaks) Oh, Ma-erh . . .

(sings again)

It is better than boiled water producing crab eyes.

(speaks) Ma-erh, eat.

KUO: I cannot eat.

LÜ: (to Kuo's wife) Ho La-mei, you eat.

HO: (eats; then to Lü) I bow to you, master. Your disciple has awakened.

LÜ: (to Ho) I am afraid you may not awaken. But Kuo Ma-erh has not yet awakened (to Kuo) Give me the cup. (with his fingers, Lü scoops up the remaining from the bottom of the cup and smears it on Kuo's mouth)

KUO: Oh, this is wonderful stuff. Like milk anointing the head, sweet dew cleansing the heart, it is truly good stuff. (to Lü) Sir, the stuff you just smeared on my mouth—what is it?

LÜ: The stuff I just smeared on your mouth was the leftover tea.

KUO: Where is the rest of it? Give me some more.

LÜ: There is no more.

KUO: Where could it have gone to?

LÜ: Ho La-mei ate it.

KUO: She ate it? What does it mean?

LÜ: It means that she obtained the *Tao* first.

KUO: What about me?

LÜ: You remain by the roadside.⁵³

KUO: It sounds that I am a willow tree.

LÜ: Who said that you are an elm tree?

KUO: I drank your leftover tea, what would you say? My wife drank your leftover tea, what would you say?

LÜ: You have drank my tea, you are my Taoist companion; your wife drank my tea, she is my immortal friend.

KUO: Just a minute. (to the audience) I drank his tea; I become his *Taoist companion*. My wife drank his tea, she becomes an *immortal friend* of his. *Taoist companion* sounds innocuous enough, but *immortal friend* sounds suspicious. (to Lü) You are making me a cuckold, are you not? (angry, Kuo beats Lü)

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Hung-shao-yao*)

A year-end cold has turned into a volcano.

As my disciple, you are so cross-grained.

(Kuo tears Lü's gown; Lü continues to sing)

He grabbed this plain cloth, and won't let it go.

Ripping it to shreds, it looks like funeral banners.

(Kuo continues the beating and Lü the singing)

He beat me like a spring-cow without a piece of board.

I should not persuade him to nurture his virtues, and open my heart to him.

(speaks) Kuo Ma-erh, don't make me angry.

KUO: If I made you angry, what would you do?

LÜ: (sings)

*I could turn the Yüeh-yang Tower into hell,
So don't show off your boxing skill.*

(Kuo continues to beat Lü)

LÜ: (sings—tune of *P'u-sa-liang-chou*)

*He beats me like a dog, dead,
Thrown into the mud to rot.
My hair's askew and falling loose;
Even the magic pills in my gourd are spilled.*

KUO: What pills? They are goat manure.

LÜ: (sings)

Turning my head, I can see the Pei-mang Mountain in the distance.

KUO: He is crazy Taoist monk.

LÜ: (sings)

He is a fool. I'm a crazy man.

KUO: (to his wife) Put some more charcoal into the stove.

WIFE: I will.

LÜ: (sings)

*With fire in the stove, do not add any charcoal,
How many more years can it burn?
Beat, beat, beat, you beat me motionless.
Are you afraid that sacred hands might block?*

(Lü blocks Kuo, gets up and speaks) Kuo Ma-erh, follow me, and we will leave this world.

KUO: This priest will not change his mind no matter how I beat him.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *K'u-huang-t'ien*)

*I'll let you find a new sacrificial table.
It's better than your fall in the dust by the roadside.
Because you are thin and forlorn, no one looks after you.
As soon as you grow up, people would pluck or climb on you.
Had I not held your long limbs,
Then, over the Tung-t'ing lake, or by the Yang-tze river.
You would have suffered the blowing of the wind, the scorch of the sun,
the pressure of snows, the freezing of frost.
You almost became the wine signpost of the Yüeh-yang Tower.*

KUO: If I were to follow you and leave this human world, what good would it do me?

LÜ: (sings)

It would make you free and relaxed.

But you cuddle yourself with laziness and stupidity.

(in the tune of *Wu-yeh-t'i*)

Worry no more of the palace of Ch'u, home of T'ao and banks of the Sui.

For I have prepared for you the jade terrace with carved railings.

I want you to repent; meditate and work on your merits.

Understand the secret of mysteries,

Give up the common world,

Learn from Yen Tzu-ling, who retired to the fishing beach.

Do not bother Chang Tzu-fang⁵⁴ burning the Lien-yun Path.

Struggle for profit and fame, to become government officials,

Are only for half a sheet of paper.

All would be nothing but a dream.

(in the tune of *San-sha*)

I think if a man can control himself he would suffer no trouble.

If his conscience is clear, he could sleep in peace.

Even in one hundred years how much leisure can one get?

Can one do more than wring his hands?

Before the spark's flare dies?

Turn back to take a look.

By the time the sun sets in the mulberries and elms and the evening scenery fades.

Then one would say, "a tired bird knows to return home."

(in the tune *Erh-sha*)

Who could, like me, build a hut by a quiet ravine?

Wrapped in a piece of hemp cloth, I sit at the sacred altar.

In the end I have avoided the right and wrong, forget honor and insult, without getting involved.

Unlike you, getting involved in the human battle field,

As a tea clerk, toil and work all day long.

(laughs, then speaks) Kuo Ma-erh, awaken now, before it is too late. (continues to sing)

I laugh—you're foolish and stubborn.

You have wasted my effort—trying to deliver you two or three times.

Can't you ever awaken, either in Heaven or on earth?

(speaks) Kuo Ma-erh, follow me, leave this world.

KUO: If I were to follow you, to leave this world, what Taoist companions do you have over there?

LÜ: If you follow me and leave this world, I will show you two of my Taoist companions.

KUO: Which two?

LU: (sings - tune of *Huang-chung-wei*)

I will let you see Lan Ts'ai-ho, who dances in the spring wind with his six Yün-yang boards.

KUO: And the other one?

Lü: *I will let you see Han Hsiang-tzu, who could make peonies bloom through the winter snow.*⁵⁵

Hurry, turn back now, without delay.

KUO: Sir, I will see you off down the stairs.

LÜ: (continues singing)

Coming down the river tower, near the waterfront.

(speaks) Alas! Hsü Shen-weng could not wait. He has left.

KUO: Where?

LÜ: (sings)

Start the boat. Hoist the sail.

(Speaks) Kuo Ma-erh, come aboard.

KUO: You go first.

LÜ: I'll go first.

KUO: (pushes Lü) I will push this goddamn man into the water.

LÜ: (speaks) This fool almost pushed me into the water. (sings)

*I'll go to the P'eng-lai Palace and Fang-chang Mountain,⁵⁶
Those who would see me off don't have to go west to Yangkuan.⁵⁷*

And I don't have to stare at Wei-ch'eng with tears in his eyes.⁵⁸

(Lü exits)

KUO: He has gone. I have been bothered by him the whole day. I haven't sold any tea. It's getting late. I'd better put the boiler away and close my shop. (to his wife) Let's go home.
(both exit)

* * * * *

INTERLUDE

KUO MA-ERH: (enters) Ever since I met that Taoist, whenever I close my eyes I would hear him say, "Kuo Ma-erh, follow me, leave this world." How can I leave this world. I no longer sell tea, now I sell

wine under the Yueh-yang Tower. I have to buy some appetizers. I'd better not go down the main street. I'm afraid I'll meet that crazy Taoist again. I'll take this alley.

LÜ: (enters, dashing toward Kuo) Kuo Ma-erh, where are you going?

KUO: (to the audience) I tried to avoid him, but I bumped right into him. (to Lü) Sir, I no longer sell tea under the Yueh-yang Tower. I now sell wine. I would like to invite you to drink three cups of wine in my shop.

LÜ: So you invite me to drink three cups of wine. I've gotten drunk twice before on that tower. Now you invite me again—to get drunk once more.

(they walk together toward Kuo's shop)

KUO: Come up the stairs. Sir, have a bowl of wine.

LÜ: You have one too.

KUO: Sir, have another bowl.

LÜ: You, too.

KUO: I'll take you downstairs.

LÜ: Kuo Ma-erh, follow me. Leave this world.

KUO: How can I leave this world? If I were to leave, what shall I do with my wife?

LÜ: Kill your wife.

KUO: Kill my wife? But, then, who would pay for her life?

LÜ: Why, you would pay for her life.

KUO: That is just fine! But, even if I wished to kill my wife, I couldn't. I have no weapon.

LÜ: Isn't this a fine sword? (shows Kuo his sword)

KUO: Sir, this is a fine sword.

LÜ: (sings - tune of *Shang-hua-shih*, in the mode of *Hsien-lü*)

This sword had accompanied me thirty years wandering on the sea.

Each night its brilliance shone upon the north star.

(speaks) Kuo Ma-erh, I will give you this sword, but I want a gift in return.

KUO: What sort of gift do you want?

LÜ: (continues singing)

I want a woman's bloody head.

KUO: That sounds easy for you!

LÜ: (still singing)

For you—a flower by the wall, a willow by the roadside.

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

Who would be willing to get drunk three times on the Yüeh-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 Yüeh-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;

Harnessing a black ox, I'll travel to the east of the Eastern Sea.
 The divine fungus, the longevity grass both promise twenty or
 thirty years of life;
 The Po-lo trees and the Fu-sang trees can live eight or nien
 thousand years.
 Over the white jade towers and golden palaces, linger the clouds
 and smokes.
 In the Tzu-wei Palace, Ch'ing-hsiao Palace, the jade ornamented
 girls swing gracefully.
 The parrot and phoenix cup are filled with the Jade Liquid.
 The dragon and lion burners spill fragrant smokes.
 Some blow, some sing, the fairy lads clap their hands,
 The players play the dancers dance, Liu Kun takes the lead.⁶³
 To be a boy or to be a girl, one would suffer like being boiled
 or fried.
 For chickens or ducks, they are either fried or roasted.
 At the time of coming, a person has peaceful eyebrows and
 expectant eyes;
 At the time of leaving one ends up with only empty hands and
 fists.
 I would advise both the wise and the dumb to return to the
 great Tao.
 The young and the old could jointly tie up thier good Karma.
 On the human body, there are obviously four hundred and
 four diseases,
 But in my heart there are thirty-three hidden heavens.
 Neither the wind nor the rain bothers me; how could I know
 the hot and cold seasons?
 East, I don't worry about, west, I don't worry about, I'd
 become an immortal.
 When a boat reaches the heart of a river, hold the rudders firm;
 When an arrow is mounted on a bow, release it with care.
 If in this life I don't give others conveniences,
 Then a mere chanting of "Amida Buddha" will be in vain.
 (sings—tune of Tuan-cheng-hao, in the mode of Cheng-kung)
 I advise you, mortals, do not strive with temper.
 Return while there is time,
 Heaven and earth are to be used as a huge quilt.
 Just sleep as Ch'en T'uan did.

(in the tune of Kun-hsiu-ch'iu)

I wear a piece of plain clothes,
 Eat no cooked food;
 Though plain, there is taste in plainness.
 I am not sitting at the edge of a cliff to contemplate.
 If people ask me my name or where my home is,
 It is very easy for them to find me.
 Just prepare a wine feast, with Chung-li facing me.
 I'm afraid that you like a dumb deer, have been trapped by a
 pack of tigers and wolves.
 A sea of right and wrong has drowned Ma-erh dead.
 I'd treat you—a tree felled by wind.

KUO: (enters with Head of Street) Isn't that the Taoist coming?
 Let's listen to what he is citing.

LÜ: (chants)

Visit North Sea in the morning, rest at Ts'ang-wu at night.
 With sword sheathed in sleeve, my courage surges high.
 I was drunk three times at Yüeh-yang, yet no one recognized
 me.

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

KUO: That is enough! You murdered my wife. Where are you going?

(pulls Lü)

LÜ: (sings—tune of T'ang-hsiu-ts'ai)

You pull your master on the street,
 This is the strength I advise my disciples to cultivate.

KUO: (beating Lü) I will beat you like a disciple.

LÜ: You cannot beat me.

(sings again)

Beat, beat, beat.
 To forgive people in this life is not foolish;
 Heaven has given birth to the naughty fellow.
 Who eats so strong.

(He frees himself from Kuo's hands; sings—tune of Kun-hsiu-ch'iu)

Let me go in peace.
 Why did I not annoy you?
 My drum beaters are called "temper saver."
 Wherever I go, this dumb drum always follows me.
 "Dumb" means unawakened.
 You willow! Today you are as crisp as onion,

*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

this document?

Look, look, look where your wife is?

Who, who, who is the murderer?

Come, come, come with me to see the officials.

KUO: Head of Street, a moment ago you also saw my wife. You can be my witness when we see the officials.

HEAD OF STREET: You don't have to wait for him to finish singing another song. Just arrest him to see the officials.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Sha-wei*)

Don't you ever wish that your branch would betray the presence of spring.

I want you to follow me to the Three Islands, without getting lost.

Saying farewell to the waters of Hsiao, Hsiang and the Tung-t'ing Lake.

I'll return to attend the divine festival of P'an-t'ao.

The wine bubbles with heavenly fragrance, its taste is beautiful.

The music plays in the clouds; its tune is exotic.

Chiang-shu and Ch'ing-ch'in⁶⁷ stand there side by side.

Each is lovely and beautiful, has no match in the human world.

I advise you, pack up your worldly desires

You should not be bound by your charming wife.

KUO: You've kidnaped my wife. I can't let you go free. (to Head of Street) Head of street, help me to take this man to see the officials. Somehow I want my wife returned to me.

LÜ: This dumb man is stupid and muddled, he can't wake up. I have wasted my three visits to the Yüeh-yang Tower. (again sings)

This man, with a dumb brain and a stupid head cannot be convinced to repent.

I've traveled nine thousand miles in the Red Dust in vain!

(frees himself from Kuo and exits)

KUO: Fine! Two strong young men could not get hold of a Taoist monk. Well, I don't care where he went . . . I will chase him.

HEAD OF STREET: There are two roads here. You go that way and I'll go this way. We'll trap him from both directions. I don't think he can fly to Heaven.

KUO: You're right. Let's chase him.

(both exit.)

ACT IV

LÜ: (enters, beating on his drum; recites a poem)

Who could rank with the Taoist Lo-fu?

He wore grass clothes, ate vegetables, and despised kings and dukes.

The time of the human world, he cares not.

In the universe of his wine pot, he is free.

While checking a chess game, the river moon dawns.

With a long roar, Hai-men changes to autumn.

Finishing drinking, he turns his head and chats on his way home.

With a smile, he points at the edge of the sky.

KUO: (enters and grabs Lü) I've caught you! This time I will not let you get away. We will go to the officials together.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Hsin-shui-ling*, in the mode of *Shuang-tiao*)

This murderer must be a sacred charm to protect you.

He asked you to be an immortal, yet you don't wake up.

You regard me as a cloth wine bag.

Please look into this drug gourd . . .

I am not a country bum.

I also have three volumes of heavenly books.

KUO: What heavenly books? Could they be your alms ledger?

LÜ: (sings again)

Don't mistake them for alms ledger.

KUO: (again dragging Lü) Let's go see the officials.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Chu-ma-t'ing*)

You have torn my robe sleeves.

You might miss the chance of brewing musk-fragrant tea with dew.

If you hold my silk belt tight,

How could I pawn my lute for wine in the city of phoenix in spring?

And do find money cage in the Chien-hsi villa?

Go to P'eng-lai, the divine island, instead of home.

KUO: Where are you going? You have killed someone.

LÜ: (continues singing)

If I owe someone some debt.

Then I could not be found for my place is covered by white clouds.

KUO: But my wife, where did you take her?

LÜ: She is not your wife.

KUO: Then is she your wife?

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Ch'en-tsui-tung-feng*)

She is my destined companion since childhood.

And as husband and wife, since we were kids.

Oh, you fool! She is my wife.

Can't you understand?

KUO: You are not a man of this world. How can you have a wife?

LÜ: (continues singing)

A Taoist monk should be matched with a Taoist nun.

(speaks) You dumb fellow.

(sings again)

*We are a couple—my name is Lü.*⁶⁸

KUO: Don't try to argue with me. I am going to sue you.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Ch'i-ti-hsiang*)

Go ahead, sue me at the highest authorities.

Don't you say, "Even one would wear out one's iron shoes, he could not find."

Come to think of it, it would not take any time at all.

You have just eaten half a bowl of spittle, in vain.

(in the tune of *Mei-hua-chiu*)

I think you are but a vulgar person.

Who cannot tell the wise from the fool.

You are a stupid person, a peasant.

Don't you think I have evil magic tricks?

I am holding the nose-bar myself.

You are pulling my cloth robe.

I am anxious to return.

But you bother your teacher on the roads.

Why I don't say anything.

Think for yourself.

(sing—tune of *Shou-chiang-nan*)

I want to chant aloud flying over the Tung-t'ing Lake.

You talk about honey and cream in your tea shops.

(an official and his clerks enter)

Lü: (again singing)

With his beard shaped like a round fan.

*He is even crueler than the Tao-lu.*⁶⁹

No wonder the Taoist Ho Hsien-ku' was frightened.

KUO: (to the officials) This Taoist monk has murdered my wife. Your honor, be my judge.

OFFICIAL: (to Lü) Hey, you Taoist—how dare you kill someone in broad daylight.

LÜ: Kuo Ma-erh accuses me of killing his wife. But his wife did not die.

OFFICIAL: Then where is Ho La-mei? Call her. Let me see her.

LÜ: She is right here. (making magic gestures) Quickly! (Ho enters)

WOMAN: Master, did you call? What can I do for you?

LÜ: Isn't this his wife?

OFFICIAL: (to Kuo) Kuo Ma-erh, you have accused this Taoist monk of killing your wife. Now your wife is here. Since you have wrongly accused an innocent man, you must suffer the same consequences. (to his clerks) Men, take him out and kill him. (the official and his group exit)

KUO: What shall I do?

LÜ: Kuo Ma-erh, you have accused me of killing your wife. Now your wife is here. As one who has wrongly accused an innocent person, you suffer the same consequences. Now they will kill you. Do you want me to save you?

KUO: You know I want you to save me.

(Chung-li and the other immortals enter)

CHUNG-LI: (to Kuo) Kuo Ma-erh, do you know who I am?

KUO: How come the official disappeared and his attendants also disappeared? And here is a group of immortals. Why! I have come to the Five Dragon Altar by mistake?

LÜ: Kuo-Ma-erh, do you recognize these immortals?

KUO: Who is the official with the beard?

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Shui-hsien-tzu*)

This is Chung-li of the Han, who has charge of the register of all immortals.

KUO: This one holds a cane in his hand. Is he a clerk?

LÜ: (sings)

This is Li, who uses an iron crutch and whose hair is never combed.

KUO: Oh, the one wearing a green robe, is he not an official?

LÜ: (again singing)

This is Lan Ts'ai-ho, whose musical boards are made of Yün-yang wood.

KUO: Who is this old man?

LÜ: (sings)

This is Chang-kuo-lao, who rides the donkey backward over the Chao-chou-bridge.

KUO: Who is this one carrying a gourd on his back?

Lü: (sings)

This is Hsü-Shen-weng, who carries a drug gourd on his back.

KUO: Who is this who carries a flower basket?

LÜ: (sings).

This is Han Hsiang-tzu, Han Yü's nephew.⁷⁰

KUO: Who is this one wearing a red robe?

LÜ: (sings)

This is Ts'ao Kuo-chiu, a relative of the Sung Court.

KUO: May I dare ask you, Sir, who are you?

LÜ: Your humble Taoist has the surname Lü, single name Yen, with a courtesy name, Tung-pin. My Taoist title is Ch'un-yang-tzu. (sings again)

I am Lü Ch'un-yang, who loves to play a dumb drum.

KUO: Now I see. Thirty years ago I was the old willow tree under the Yüeh-yang Tower. My wife, Ho La-mei, was the white plum tree in front of the Tu-K'ang Temple. We were born to the human world. Later we were married. If you, Master, had not delivered us We would not be able to return to the Way. I bow to you, my teacher. Your disciple has awakened.

CHUNG-LI: Since you are both awakened, listen to my instructions.

(cites a verse)

Since you were creatures made on earth and wood of the mortal world,

I sent Tung-pin to deliver you.

Now your deeds are completed; your merits accomplished.

You will ride the divine cranes on the road to immortality.

(Kuo and the woman bow in gratitude)

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Shou-wei*)

*I have come to the Yüeh-yang Tower three times
To show you the road to the Purple Dwelling.⁷¹*

Now you know the days and the months of the mortals are long.

You no longer suffer the miseries of knives and axes of the human world.

Title: Lü Tung-pin was drunk three times on the Yüeh-yang Tower.

Theme: Kuo Shang-tsao and his wife entered the Ling-hsü Hall.

THE END

NOTES:

1. The P'an-t'ao Festival, in the Taoist legend, is one honoring the birthday of Queen Mother of the West, the highest and most powerful deity of Taoism.
2. The T'ai-hua Mountain, known as the Hua Mountain, is one of the five holy mountains in China, located in modern Shensi Province. Its highest peak, shaped like palm, is called the Fairy's Palm.
3. The five Lis and three Changs were apparently famous ink makers in old China.
4. The "Dragon's Tail" was the name of a famous ink-slab made in Anhwei Province.
5. Kao Huan was the founder of the Northern Ch'i Dynasty. Once he built a high tower so that he could keep himself cool there in the summer.
6. Wang Ts'an was a famous poet of the Wei Dynasty. Once he went to take up a post in a different district. When he stayed there too long, he became homesick. So he wrote a prose-poem expressing his nostalgia, and its title was "Teng lou fu", or "Climbing up the Tower."
7. The Jade Emperor was regarded the highest deity in the Taoist Belief.
8. The "Spring of Tung-t'ing" was a name of a famous wine.
9. "The season when chickens are fat and crabs are strong" usually refers to the autumn.
10. T'ao Yuan-liang was another name of the famous poet T'ao Ch'ien of 5th century China, who loved wine and chrysanthemums.
11. When crabs are fully grown and pregnant with yellow matter, their navels would become round.
12. Po-yang is another name of Lao Tzu, founder of Taoism.
13. Ch'ang-fang had a family name Fei. He was a man of the Han Dynasty. When he served as a magistrate in a small district, he met an old man who sold wine at the market-place by hanging his wine-pot upside down. When the market was over, the old man jumped into his wine-pot and disappeared. The old man was a Taoist immortal. Fei Ch'ang-fang later gave up his political career, and learned the secret of the Tao and the trick of pot hanging from the old man.
14. The Silver River here refers to the Milky Way, or Heavenly River in Chinese legend.
15. The story related to a certain man named T'ao Ku who once obtained a maid from a Tang household. On a winter day T'ao melted snow and brewed some tea with the fresh snow water. Thinking that he had a rather unusual enjoyment, T'ao asked the maid whether her former master had anything like it. The maid answered, "How could those boorish people have anything like this? Only they lived in their golden-lined curtains, singing songs and drinking lamb wine. That's all." Having heard this, T'ao remained silent for a long time.
16. Tung-p'o is of course another name of Su Shih, the well-known Sung poet. One of his close friends was a monk named Fo-yin. There were so many stories concerning these two men. At times they tried to out-smart the other either in composing poems or in making wise-cracks.

17. Wei Yeh and P'an Lang were two poets of the Sung Dynasty. Wei was a man of Shensi (modern Shensi Province), and near the city of Shen in its suburb he built a grass hut to live in, and thus he gave up all his ambitions of seeking fame and wealth, but spent his time writing poems. When Emperor T'ai-tung of the Sung Court heard of his reputation and offered him a high position in the government, Wei refused. P'an Lang was a native of Ta-ming (in modern Hopei Province). He called himself "the Wanderer". When he lived in a city of Lo-yang (near the Sung Capital, K'ai-feng, in present Honan Province) he made a living by selling herb medicine. He also loved poetry. When Emperor T'ai-tung heard of his reputation, he offered him a high position on his Court, and granted him an honorary degree. But later on, this honorary degree was retracted because of P'an's arrogant and irresponsible conducts. The story of Wei's meeting with P'an on his mule is nowhere recorded.
18. Wang Hung was a man of the Chin Dynasty (ca. 3rd century). He heard about the great poet, Tao Ch'ien, and wished to meet him very much. Finding no way to introduce himself to Tao from a distance. One day Wang heard that T'ao was going to the mountains. He brought food and wine and awaited T'ao by the roadside. When T'ao came by, Wang Hung presented him with wine and food. T'ao drank the wine, ate the food, but didn't even bother to ask the name of his benefactor.
19. According to one of the legends concerning the great poet T'ang, Li Po (ca. 700-760). He became drunk one day when he was riding in a boat on the river. He saw the bright moon reflected in the river, and decided to fish it. He jumped into the river and got himself drowned.
20. Liu Ling was a man of the Chin Dynasty, and a member of the famed Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove. He was a poet as well as a wine lover. He loved the wine so much that he wrote a piece of poetry praising the virtues of wine. He usually rode in a deer-drawn carriage with a wine pot in hand. He ordered a man to follow him behind with a shovel. He instructed the man, "If I should get drunk and die, then dig a grave and bury me there wherever it may be."
21. P'ing-k'ang Lane was located in the northern region of Ch'ang-an, Capital of the T'ang Court. It was known as the district of sing-song-girls. Since it was located in the northern part, the lane was also known as Pei-li, or North Lane. It was reported that when young scholars passed their palace examinations, they would visit this lane to celebrate.
- 21a. Here the idea behind the sentence suggests the ambitions of Confucian scholars for fame and merit which cannot be achieved unless they could pass the examinations. Thus the ink-stick was a very necessary item used by scholars more than anybody else.
22. The expression "Half a sheet of paper" is probably referring to the paper used by scholars in the examinations.
23. The three Hsiangs here refer to the three districts in Huanan (now Hunan Province) all named with the character 'hsiang', which, incidentally, was the ancient name for the entire area, the three districts were Hsiang-hsiang, Hsiang-t'an and Hsiang-yin.

24. According to legend, Lli Tung-pin himself was converted to Taoism when he was made to dream in which he experienced all the experiences in life, including happiness, sorrow, departures, re-unions, success, failure, glories and humiliation. When he finally woke up, the yellow millet in the pot was still not cooked.
25. Ya-fu refers to Chao Ya-fu, a famous general of the Han Dynasty. Once he stationed on the border region known as Hsi-liu, meaning "Thin Willows?" Thus he called his garrison Liu-ying, or Willow Garrison. So the willow tree was involved with Ya-fu.
26. Emperor Yang here refers to the infamous play-boy of the Sui Dynasty. He was a man of lust and luxury. During his reign, he ordered the Grand Canal dug out so that he could ride his dragon boat to visit the beautiful south. On the two banks of the canal, willows were planted for providing shade. Thus the willow trees were involved with Emperor Yang.
27. King Ling of the State of Ch'u was a man of lust who was fond of young girls with slender waists. Consequently, the palace maids, in order to gain favor from the king, starved themselves so that they could have slender waists. The young beauties thin waisted thus were traditionally described as having "willow waists." Thus the willow was involved with the Ch'u king.
28. Ibid.
29. The long pavilion was a place where friends and relatives would see their dear ones off. It was usually built outside a city about ten Chinese miles. Therefore, it was also called "Ten Mile Long Pavilion" in the olden days. Willows were usually planted and were used for two purposes; travelers would tie their horses on a tree while say good-by to their kinfolks. Those who see the traveler off could break a willow branch and give it to the traveler as a good-will gesture.
30. Pa-ling Bridge was located outside the city of Chang-an, Capital of T'ang. It was a place where people would say good-by to one another when some one left the Capital. According to custom, people who saw some one off at the bridge he would break a willow branch and give it to the person leaving as a token of good wishes. If the willow branches were thrown on the ground and were trampled by horses and carriages, they were not valuable. Thus the allusion implies bad willows.
31. Chang-t'ai was the name of a street in Chang-an, Capital of T'ang Court. A young scholar by the name of Han Hung met a young sing-song girl there whose family name was Liu, meaning "willow" and who promised to marry Han. However for three years after their departure, Han Hung could not have his promise fulfilled. To express his feelings for the girl. Han wrote a poem with these lines:
- Oh, the willow of Chang-t'ai, the willow of Chang-t'ai
In the old days you were fresh, green and beautiful.
But are you still there now
- Thus the illusion here implies beautiful young girls.
32. Here the expression "Lü cliff" has a double meaning. The Taoist Lü Tung-pin's name was Lü Yen, and the character "yen" means "cliff" in Chinese.
33. Chien-hsi was a place in Fukien (province) famous for its tea.

34. Lang-yüan was a legendary place where fairies lived.
35. The purple robe and white gown were symbolic of the official class in olden days.
36. Golden Pill, or Golden Elixir, is the magic drug which the Taoists tried to cultivate in order to achieve immortality.
37. Black temples and rouge faces imply men of youth. In Taoism, it is believed that when a man achieves immortality, he would remain a permanent youth.
38. Hsü Fu was a man of the Ch'in Dynasty, the first empire of China. Emperor Shih-huang of Ch'in was obsessed with the desire of attaining immortality. He had heard that a certain fungus, when consumed, would help a man reach immortality. But it could only be found in the Eastern Seas. So he commissioned Hsü Fu to go to Eastern Seas to gather the divine fungus.
39. Ch'en T'uan was a man of the Sung Dynasty. He gave up his ambitions of attaining fame and wealth in governmental service. He went to Mount Hua (Hua Shan), one of the sacred mountains of China, trying to achieve the Tao, and thus became a recluse.
40. Lao-tzu, founder of Taoism as the legend says, went and passed through Han-ku Pass, and disappeared. It was at the Han-ku Pass that Lao-tzu left his famous work, the *Tao-Te Ching*.
41. Kuo Shang-tso is another name of Kuo Ma-erh.
42. Ch'en Fan was a man of the Eastern Han time. He seldom kept his visitors overnight with the exception of one friend, named Hsü Ch'ih. Whenever Hsü came to pay him a visit, Ch'en would lower a couch (bed) specifically reserved for Hsu and kept him overnight. Thus the expression "lower one's bed" has become a synonym of hospitality.
43. Ts'ao Ts'ao was the prime minister of the State of Wei during the Three Kingdoms period in ancient China. Once he fought a war with allied forces of Wu and Shu states. Defeated he had a narrow escape on the Hua-jung Path.
44. King Pa of Western Ch'u, fought with Liu Pang for the empire of the Ch'in Dynasty, though he was a strong man who once raised a tripod of one thousand catties (about a thousand pounds), he lost his fight, and committed suicide on the bank of the River Wu.
45. There are many stories told about the scoundrel and the prime minister of the State of Wei during the Three Kingdoms period (about third century), Ts'ao Ts'ao. The expression that he "slept on a round pillow at night" suggests that it kept him alert, for round pillows would make people alert in their sleep; the expression that he "gave poisoned wine to others" perhaps hints that Ts'ao Ts'ao had murdered many people when he was in power.
46. In the Chinese language, the surname Lü is made of two component parts, all meaning "mouth." On top it is a small-sized "mouth," and at the bottom, it is a large-sized "mouth." Thus the pun is made here.
47. The Chinese character "p'in" means "quality," it is made up with three but similar parts, all meaning "mouth." Thus the pun.
48. In Chinese language the expression for "goat's fat" and that for "willow trees' sap" sound alike, namely, *yang-chih*. Thus the pun is made here.
49. The Chinese expression for "dry food" is *Kan-liang*. The expression for "dry

- Beam" is also kan-liang. The two sound alike, though the characters are different. Thus the pun is made here.
50. Since in his previous life Kuo Ma-erh was a willow tree, thus Lü Tung-pin made this remark. For when a willow tree is cut up, it could produce plenty of boards.
 51. The Chinese word for "way" is *tao*, which is also the ultimate truth in Taoism, namely, the *Tao*.
 52. The cuckoo-bird cup was a kind of tea cup with a cuckoo-bird design.
 53. As explained before, the Chinese word *tao* means the Way, the road. Since Kuo Ma-erh was a willow tree in his previous life, he was left to the roadside for he failed to obtain the *tao* (road).
 54. Chang Tzu-fang whose given name was Liang, helped Liu Pang, later Emperor Kao-tsu of the Han, to overthrow the Ch'in empire and founded the Han. But when the Han Court was firmly established, Chang Liang retired from the government office and devoted himself to the pursuit of the *TAO*.
 55. Both Lan Ts'ai-ho and Han Hsiang-tzu were members of the Eight Immortals.
 56. P'eng-lai palace and Fang-chang Mountain were legendary places in Taoist religion.
 57. Yang-kuan was considered the furthest point to the west, and therefore, the last outpost where people could bid farewell to those who would go beyond Yang-kuan to the barbarian region.
 58. Wei-ch'eng was located in Shensi (modern Shensi Province). It is usually cited in poems, especially poems on departure.
 59. Ts'ang-wu, in Taoism, was a legendary mountain, while North Sea a legendary sea. North Sea was located in the far north. Ts'ang-wu was located in the south. The two form the boundaries of the world. Thus only an immortal could visit North Sea in the morning, and take a rest at Ts'ang-wu by night.
 60. Lü's name, Tung-pin, separately means "cave" and "pin iron." Thus the explanation here.
 61. In Buddhism as well as in Taoism, human ideas or intentions are usually compared to a horse, always jumping and galloping, difficult to control; and human hearts or desires are compared to monkeys, always moving and changing, very difficult to tame.
 62. Ibid.
 63. Informatin on Liu Kun is not known. It seems that he was a good dancer.
 64. The Weaving Girl, in Chinese legends, is a star in Heaven. She was the daughter of Queen Mother of the West, the highest deity in Taoism. She descended to the human world and married a cowherd. When it was time for her to go back to heaven, she left her husband and two children behind. When the cowherd found out, he chased after her. When he was about to catch up to her, the Queen Mother appeared and interfered, unwilling to let the two lovers meet again, the Queen Mother put a river (the Heavenly River to the Chinese, or the Milky Way to the West) between them. Thus the two stars, the Weaving Girl and the Cowherd, could be seen on either bank of the river.
 65. The Jade Maiden and the Golden Lad were usually mentioned together in

- Chinese fairy -tales. They were believed to be the pages serving the Jade Emperor in Heaven.
66. Red Dust in Chinese literature always alludes to the human world.
 67. Both Chiang-shu (Red Tree) and Ch'ing-ch'in (black Lute) were fairies in Taoism.
 68. This is another pun involving Chinese expressions and characters. In Chinese a married couple is usually called "two mouths" literally. The family name Lü, as mentioned before, is made of two component parts meaning "mouth." Thus the character Lü can also be interpreted as "two mouths."
 69. Tao-lu was an official appointed by the government to take charge of the Taoist affairs.
 70. Han Yü was a great statesman and man of letters of the T'ang Dynasty.
 71. Purple Dwelling (or residence) refers to the dwelling place of a fairy and immortal.

Chien-nu's Soul Left Her Body

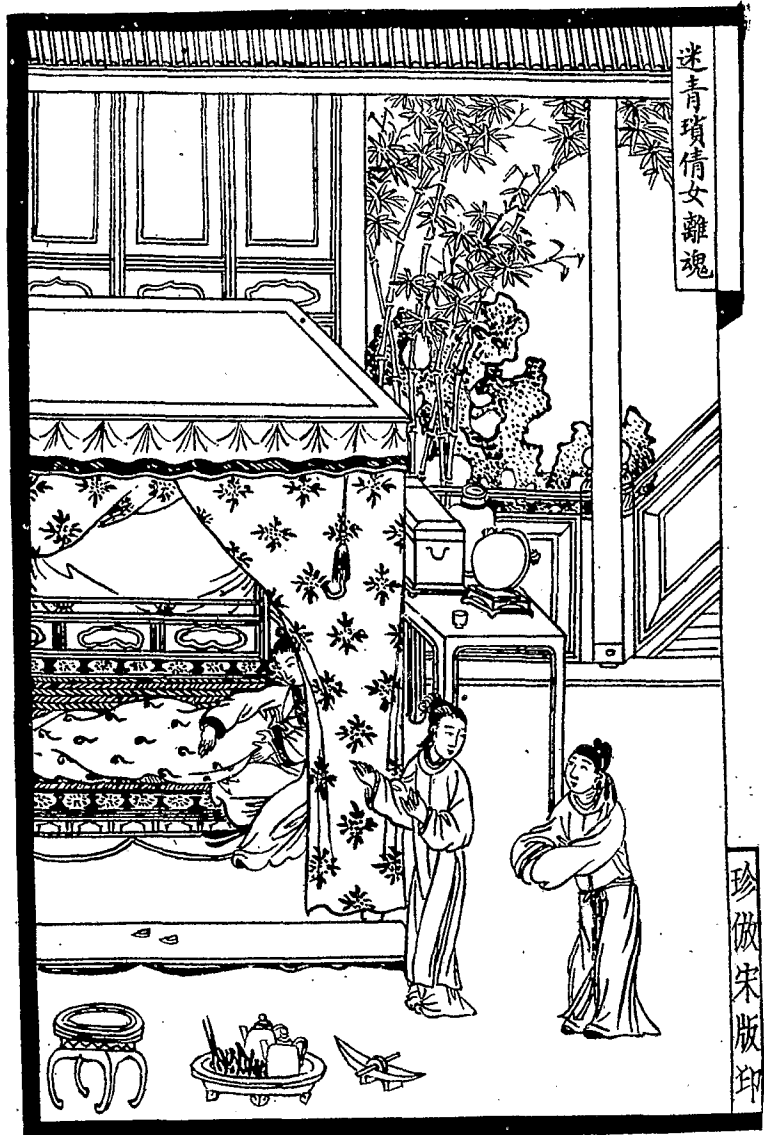
倩女離魂

by

Cheng Te-hui

鄭德輝

迷青瑣倩女離魂



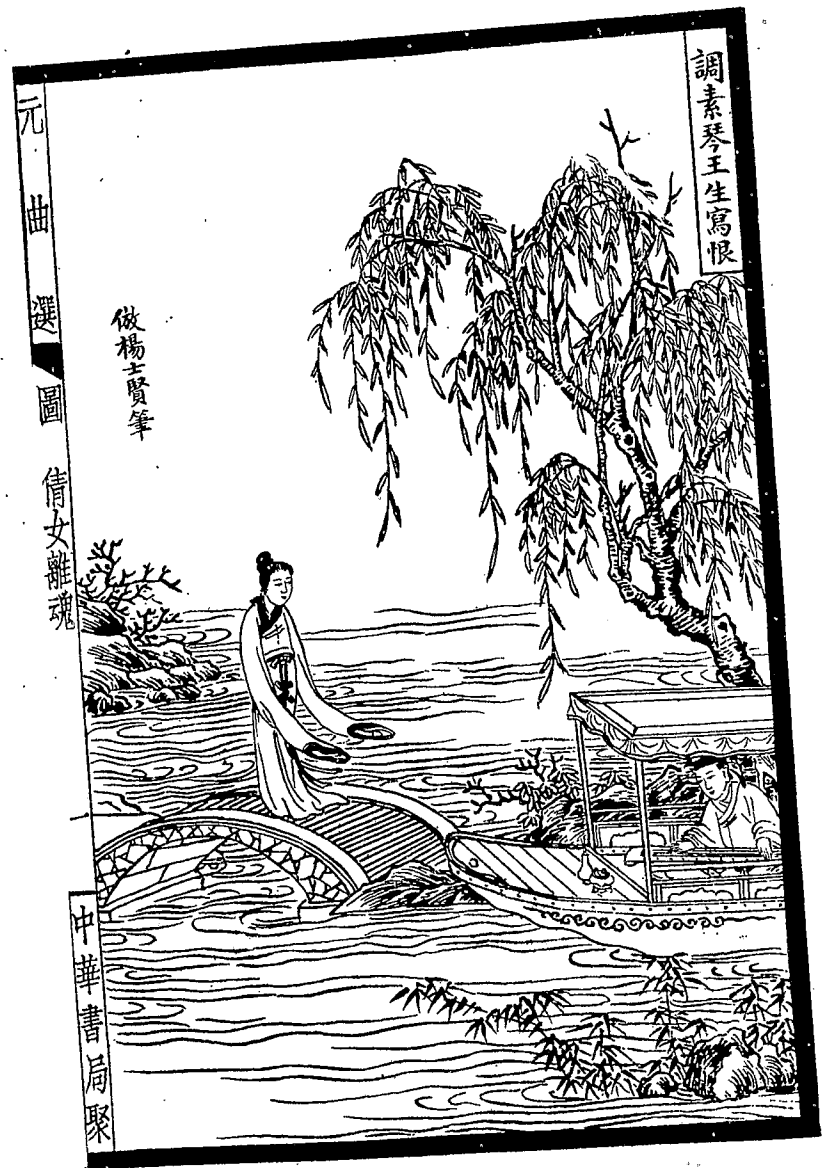
珍做宋版印

調素琴王生寫恨

做楊玉賢筆

元曲選圖倩女離魂

中華書局聚



PERSONS OF THE DRAMA:

- Mrs. Chang**
An elderly woman, a widow, mother of Ch'ien-nü
- Wang Wen-chü**
A young scholar, who later married Ch'ien-nü
- Ch'ien-nü**
A young maiden, future wife of Wang Wen-chü
- Mei-hsiang**
Ch'ien-nü's maid
- Chang Ch'ien**
A messenger
- A maid to Mrs. Chang
- Servants and attendants

PROLOGUE

MRS. CHANG: (enters with a servant and chants a poem)

Flowers will bloom again some day,

But a man can never have his youth,

Don't say that gold is the most valuable?

Peace and happiness worth more money.

(introducing herself) My sur-name is Li, my husband's sur-name is Chang. He died many years ago. We have a daughter whose name is Ch'ien-nü, seventeen years old now. She is very good at sewing and cooking. When my husband was still alive, we had an understanding with the Wang family—when both of us were expecting—that if our two families should be related in marriage! Later the Wang family had a boy, named Wen-chü. He is now grown up and has done well in his studies. So far he has not married. I have sent him several letters mentioning the idea of marriage. He answered me saying that he would like to see me and discuss the matter with me in person. (turning to the servant) Go to the gate and watch. If the young man comes, report to me quickly.

WANG WEN-CHÜ: (enters, chanting a poem)

Yellow volumes and green lamp have made me a seasoned scholar.

Amongst the locust trees and thorny brambles I like to hold the center position.

People of the world all believe that learning is valuable.

Why don't men read their books?

(speaks) I am Wang Wen-chü. My father was the former Secretary of the Hengchou prefecture. Unfortunately both my parents passed away. When my father was living, Mrs. Chang Kung-pi had agreed on marriage relationship between our two families. Later my mother gave birth to me and the Chang family had a girl. But because Uncle Chang died, the marriage has never taken place. My future mother-in-law wrote me several letters mentioning about this matter. Now with the spring examination about to begin and examination halls opened, I am planning to go to Ch'ang-an to take part in the examination, and at the same time pay a visit to Auntie Chang, my future mother-in-law. I'd

better go now. (walks a few steps) Here is the Chang's house. (to the servant) Please report to Mrs. Chang that Wang Wen-chü is here to see her.

SERVANT: (reporting to Mrs. Chang) Madam, a young scholar by the name of Wang Wen-chü is here to see you.

MRS. CHANG: I was just talking about him and here he comes. Show him in.

WANG: (seeing Mrs. Chang) I am sorry I never had the opportunity to visit you. I would like to take this opportunity to show my respect. (he kneels down and bows three times to Mrs. Chang)

MRS. CHANG: My son, please get up and sit down.

WANG: I come here for two reasons: first, I must pay a visit to my future mother-in-law, second, I am going to the Capital to take part in the spring examinations.

MRS. CHANG: Just a moment, my son. (to the servant) Tell the maid to bring the young miss here to meet Mr. Wang.

SERVANT: Yes madam. (goes to the back of the stage and calls) The madam wants the young miss to come out.

CHANG CH'ÏEN-NÜ: (enters with a maid) My name is Chang Ch'ien-nü. I am seventeen years old. Unfortunately my father died years ago. When he was living, he and the Wang family had made a marriage agreement. The Wang's had a son named Wang Wen-chü; and my mother gave birth to me. Unfortunately both Mr. and Mrs. Wang died. The wedding was never performed. Now my mother is calling me. I don't know what she wants. (to the maid) Mei-hsiang, come with me to see my mother.

MAID: All right, miss.

CH'ÏEN-NÜ: (seeing her mother) Mother, why were you calling me?

MRS. CHANG: My dear, I want you to meet your cousin. (Ch'ien-nü, somewhat perplexed, looks at Wang; both bow to each other)

MRS. CHANG: (to Wang) This is my daughter, Ch'ien-nü. (to daughter) You may go back to your room.

CH'ÏEN-NÜ: (to maid, as she leaves) Mei-hsiang, where does this cousin of mine come from?

MAID: Don't you know him? He is none other than the young scholar of the Wang family to whom you were promised in marriage before you were born.

CH'ÏEN-NÜ: Oh, so he is Wang Wen-chü. I wonder why mother introduced me to him as a cousin. I don't know why.

(sings—tune of *Shang-hua-shih*, in the mode of *Hsien-lü*)

*He is a young man wearing a cute hat and a light gown,
I am a young maiden wearing embroidered skirt and riding in
a fragrant carriage.*

Our talent and appearance are a perfect match.

On the road to Yang-t'ai,² my mother

Builds a wall, high for clouds and rain.³

(in the tune of *Yao-p'ien*)

She is trying to block off the charming woman of Wu Shan.⁴

The complaining girl and the bachelor would hurt.

No matter how you employ a black heart.

If you don't suppress me, I won't desire it.

But the more you try to block me,

The more I will think about it.

(exits with Mei-hsiang)

MRS. CHANG: (to servant) Clean up the study so that my son-in-law can stay here and review his classics and histories. Don't forget to serve him tea and food.

WANG: Mother, don't bother cleaning up the study. I think I should start my long journey to the Capital to take part in the examinations.

MRS. CHANG: My child, rest up for a couple of days. It won't be late. (chants a poem)

The examination days are still far away, don't you worry.

Stay at our humble home for a couple of days.

WANG: (recites a poem)

Because waves at the Gate of Yü⁵ are warm and luring,

Thus in haste I dare not ask about the marriage.

(both exit)

ACT I

CH'ÏEN-NÜ: (enters with her maid, Mei-hsiang) I am Ch'ien-nü. Ever since I met with that young scholar, Wang Wen-chü, I feel as if I have lost my mind and soul. I never expected that my mother would nullify our marriage, for she had me call him cousin. I don't know what's on her mind. Facing with such an autumn scene, I cannot but feel sad and melancholy in my heart. (sings—tune of *Tien-chiang-ch'un*, in the mode of *Hsien-lü*)

*Managing to bear through the cold night,
Suddenly I was awakened by the dawn on the silk window.
Fallen leaves sad and melancholy,
Cover the ground; no one sweeps them.*

(in the tune of *Hun-chiang-lung*)

*It is just the climate of late autumn.
Things that have troubled my heart now appear on my eye-
brows.*

*Did I ever take a look at the mirror stand?
The sewing needle had never been touched.
By night I sit by the window until the candle light is dimmed.
In my evening gown, I just let the moon go up over the tower.
I have the phoenix riding⁶ attribute,
So he must have peacock-hitting appearance.⁷
Though blocked by my mother's interference,
I can't through away my passion lightly.*

*But our secret meeting and intimate vows are being missed.
The moonlight nights and flowery days are passed in vain.
Having no fortune to be matched,
We are fated to suffer, however.*

*Passionately I cannot dissolve my loneliness.
Sickly I am afraid for my mother to know.
To look afar, heaven appears wide; and the earth narrow.
To suffer badly, my dream is broken; my soul is troubled.*

MEI-HSIANG: Please don't worry so much, miss.

CHI'EN-NÜ: Mei-hsiang, how can this be put to an end?

(sings—tune of *Yu-hu-lu*)

*Even though he did not fall ill.
He must have become thin, I guess.
Being restricted, he must be angry.
But how could he set his feet on his journey?
Although the road is not too distant,
My passion has gone with the clouds, far away.
My tears have become rain, drizzling.
I cannot lean against the bannister, by the mountains and lakes.
Looking at the edge of the sky, the blue hill is as small as a dot.*

(talking to herself) In the poem should he send me, he might blame my mother.

(again singing in the same tune)

*Perhaps he feels injustice, he just vents himself.
If his heart is not happy, so he would compose,
Showing off his romantic air, expressing his elegant style, and
boasting of his talents.*

*Here I closely examine his sentences and look at his brush
writing.*

(in the tune of *T'ien-hsia-lo*)

*I thought that he, as a man of learning, has high ambitions.
Actually this loneliness he suffers, when will it end?
Pity us, single man and woman in love, who suffer a bad fate.
I have prepared to live like love birds, in silk quilt fragrance.
He also hopes the chirping of phoenixes, in harmonious tunes.
How can we fly like a pair of butterflies, circling the beautiful
trees?*

MEI-HSIANG: I think that Master Wang is a handsome person and a wise, romantic fellow. Your beautiful figure, my lady, is an ideal match so be patient; don't worry.

CHI'EN-NÜ: Oh, Mei-hsiang, how can I endure it?

(sings—tune of *No-cha-ling*)

*A year and a day have passed, the days of re-union are few.
Thirty-three heavens have been seen, the heaven of sorrow is
the highest.⁸*

*Four hundred and four sicknesses have been suffered,
Sickness of love is unbearable.*

(speaks) He is now preparing to take the examinations.

(again singing)

*After a thousand miles he climbs up the phoenix palace.
With one leap he jumps over the Dragon Gate.
Taking over the silk whip is indeed charming.⁹*

MEI-HSIANG: My lady, Master Wang's inner talent and outer charm are indeed match.

CHI'EN-NÜ: (sings—tune of *Ch'üeh-t'a-chih*)

*According to his ambitions, he is indeed a hero.
Regarding his character, he is even more pure and lofty.
He will to leap out of the yellow dust, and to soar up into the
blue sky!¹⁰*

*Unlike swallows and sparrows on eaves making noise in early
mornings,*

He is a king whale making wind and waves on the high seas.
(speaking to Mei-hsiang) Mei-hsiang, that young scholar—
(again singing)

*When he spreads the silk paper, and writes with rabbit hair
brush.*

*He is no inferior to Lo Pini-wang who overnight drafted his
essay on Heaven.¹¹*

*Nor is he inferior to Li T'ai-po, who while drunk composed a
declaration to suppress the barbarians.¹²*

*Or like Hsiang-ju of Han, who in illness, received the Emperor's
summon.¹³*

*For ten years he has worked hard with his books and sword
in Lo-yang.*

*One day, he will achieve honor and glory among the officials
in Ch'ang-an.*

MEI-HSIANG: My lady, Master Wang is going to the Capital today to
take the examinations. The mistress has ordered me to see him
off at the willow-breaking pavilion.¹⁴

CH'EN-NU: Mei-hsiang, let's send him off at the willow-breaking
pavilion.

(both exit)

WANG: (enters with Mrs. Chang) Mother, today is a good day, so I'll
leave for the Capital to seek my fortunes there.

MRS. CHANG: Son, since you have decided to leave today, I'll see
you off at the willow-breaking pavilion. (to the servants) Go and
call the young miss.

CH'EN-NU: (enters with Mei-hsiang) Mother, I am here.

MRS. CHANG: My dear, we'll say farewell to your cousin at the
willow-breaking pavilion. Drink a toast to him.

CH'EN-NU: Yes, mother. (toast to Wang) Cousin, drink up this cup.

WANG: (drinks, then to Mrs. Chang) Mother, before I go, I have some-
thing to ask you. You remember in the past my parents did point
at the belly and negotiate with you. Later my mother gave birth
to me, and you gave birth to the young miss. But since my parents
died a few years ago, this marriage has never taken place. For
this reason I came to see you to discuss this matter. But you
have told your daughter to call me cousin. I don't know what's on
your mind. So I am asking for your explanations.

MRS. CHANG: You are quite right, my son. The reason I suggested
you call each other cousin is that for three generations our family
never married their daughters to scholars without rank. I think
you have already acquired a bellyful of learning, but you haven't
achieved fame and merit. Now you are going to the Capital to
take the examinations. When you get an official position, you
can come back for your wedding.

WANG: In that case, thank you, I better leave.

CH'EN-NU: Cousin, if you get a position, don't you accept any
silk whip from others.

WANG: Don't you worry. When I get a position, I'll be back for
our wedding.

CH'EN-NU: Oh, it is so hard to say farewell!

(sings—tune of *Ts'un-li-ya-ku*)

*Like morning rain at the city of Wei, or sunset at Lo-yang,
I cannot sing the Yang-kuan tunes.*

Today I come to say farewell to a young man to Ch'ang-an.

*We just leave each other like this, forsake each other so
easily, and become forlorn.*

(sighs and speaks) Oh, cousin—(singing again)

*Only the Ch'u rivers are deep, the Ch'in passes are far away
the mountains of T'ai and Hua are high.*

*I sigh for human life. Departures are too many and reunions
too few.*

WANG: My dear young lady, if I could get an official position, you
would become a lady.

CH'EN-NU: (sings—tune of *Yüan-ho-ling*)

Wine in this cup is drunk with tears.

The secret of my heart, I'll tell him.

Like the willow branch broken at the long pavilion,

Don't you, my cousin, have only the upper part, not the lower.

From now on I shall spend my melancholy evenings alone.

The sorrow of departure will never end.

WANG: In the past I did not think of you.

CH'EN-NU: But today it becomes sadder.

(sings—tune of *Shang-ma-chiao*)

Outside the bamboo window sounds the green branches.

Below the mossy steps deep grows the green grass.

The study suddenly becomes desolate.

*The old garden is quiet and forlorn, no one comes.
How can this sorrow be dissolved?
This moment is indeed very difficult to bear.*

(in the tune of Yu-ssu-men)

*Over the colorful clouds ends the sound of the purple
phoenix flute.*

Tonight where will you anchor your orchid boat?

The tiny sail can't block.

The west wind is bad.

The dashing waves are rolling like snow.

The shore shadows are getting tall.

For thousands of miles water and clouds are floating together

(in the tune of Sheng-hu-lu)

Don't you be like a lonely goose, which treasures its feathers.

It is said that good things seldom last long.

Your body is gone, but your heart shouldn't be.

To my man, in a low voice I whisper.

Mei-hsiang has just told me.

I fear that mother may worry.

MRS. CHANG: Mei-hsiang, get the carriage ready, take your young miss back.

MEI-HSIANG: Come on, miss; let's get into the carriage.

WANG: Please go back, young miss, I have to go now.

CH'IENT-NÜ: (sings—tune of Hou-t'ing-hua)

Here I hold on the jade-screened carriage.

There he hesitates to mount the golden stirrup.

My tears have dampened the fragrant silk sleeves.

His whip is hanging by the green jade saddle.

Take a look at the long, long road.

My sorrow is piled high on the old road into the west wind.

Confused are my thoughts, for the person of passion is gone.

The clear blue heaven, if it has emotions, should grow old.

Choked is my breath, and my sighing cannot be stopped.

Disorderly the wind blows, and it disturbs my troubled bosom.

Flowing continuously my tears ruin the rouge on my face.

Drizzling is the evening rain that settles the dust on the road.

(in the tune of Liu-yeh-erh)

The drizzling rain has covered the whole river and tower.

Alone I sit in the carriage, hesitating to cross the river bridge.

*The hoofs of his horse are noisy, but he is reluctant to trod
into the Capital-bound road.*

Each look hurts my heart.

Each step turns his head.

Onto a long journey, rivers are winding, and mountains distant.

WANG: Please don't worry, miss. As soon as I get an official position, I'll come back to marry you. Please get into the carriage and go home.

CH'IENT-NÜ: (sings—tune of Chuan-sha)

From now on I can only write my sorrows on a banana leaf.

*I will no longer try to explain my dreams by casting the
shih straws.¹⁵*

*What interest do I have in decorating myself with pearls and
jades?*

This real passion of mine and my soul will wander about.

When he is gone, it would follow him around.

I follow him until he, like Ssu-ma, writes his poem on a bridge.¹⁶

*I do not hope that he will ride in a four-drawn carriage show-
ing off his glories.*

With me forsaken like Ch'ung-Chi.¹⁷

By the time Tzu-kao returned,

*He had already missed the reunion of phoenixes under the
peach blossoms.¹⁸*

(exits with Mei-hsiang)

WANG: Now I should say good-bye to you, mother, and start my trip. (to servants) Get my horse ready. I am going to the Capital to seek fame and fortune.

(exits)

ACT II

MRS. CHANG: (enters in a hurry) Before joy is over, sorrow has come. Ever since my daughter, Ch'ien-nü, saw Master Wang off at the willow-breaking pavilion, she has been stricken and confined to bed. I have asked doctors to treat her but instead of getting better, her situation has become worse. I don't know what to do. I thought my daughter may want some soup to drink, so I am going to her room to take a look. (exits)

WANG: (enters) Since I left my beloved one at the willow-breaking pavilion, I cannot get her out of my mind. Tonight I have docked

FORWARD

This volume aims to fill a void for the English-speaking world in the history and criticism of Chinese dramatic literature. There is not available in the English language any single complete work of the great playwrights of the Yüan Dynasty (1260-1368). Brought together for the first time is an important work by each of the four most reputable and widely representative dramatists of this important era. Indeed, most critics agree that the Yüan drama is the first significant body of Chinese dramatic literature which meets the exacting requisites of Modern theater in any sense.

The phenomenal rise and popularity of the theater under the Mongolian rule in the early part of the Yüan Dynasty has been attributed by numerous critics to many and widely varied causes.¹ One such critic is Shionoya On. He writes:

“The Chinese people had always held the teachings of Confucius in high esteem, and Confucianism had been regarded as the foundation of both government and religion. But neither the Chin (Tartars) nor the Yüan (Mongols), conquerors who rose from the north, were capable of understanding and appreciating Confucian teachings and they allowed considerable freedom of thought in religion—Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity alike. These Chinese people, humiliated by the rule of the foreign tribes, sought comfort and consolation in poetry and wine. They took great delight in the newly developed form through which they could express their indignation against their own oppressors by poking fun at characters of the past. They criticized their world with passion and through satire admonished the people. Those who heard the songs generally developed a sense of sympathy and satisfaction. As the trend continued, many talented writers appeared. With their exquisite words and beautiful tunes, these writers excited their audience, and the entire country responded. When the Mongols had conquered China, they gradually began to indulge themselves in luxury and the pursuit of enjoyment; and they took great delight in the drama and in novels, and through them gradually came to understand the customs and sentiments of the Chinese people. Even those who had no serious interest in the drama also followed suit that helped to push the tide onward. As a result, the drama gained an unprecedented popularity during the Yüan period.”²

Shionoya attributes the development of the drama to three main reasons: (1) the new freedom of thought on the part of the people (2) the frustration of the Chinese people, particularly writers and intellectuals; and (3) encouragement by the ruling class in the Yüan Court, however indirect it may have been. This gave the Chinese playwright a necessary freedom, ironically a freedom he had not enjoyed before, and resulted in a new literary genre at a time of national oppression and humiliation. This development, of course, is no great mystery to the modern drama critic, who knows that drama cannot flourish in its true sense unless the playwright is free to formulate what is already existent in the hearts and minds of the people. Unwittingly, the Mongols had provided this freedom which gave birth to a new group of talented Chinese playwrights.

《Since the development of a particular genre of Chinese literature is generally related to a particular dynastic period in history, modern scholars, especially Chinese historians, usually use terms such as, "epochal literature" and "epochal genre", to describe it. They agree, for example, that the epochal genre of the Ch'u State (the period of the Warring States, c. 500 B.C.) is sao (elegy); that of the Han Dynasty (206-220 A.D.) is fu (rhymed prose); that of the Six Dynasties (220-605) is p'ien-wen (parallel prose); that of the T'ang (618-906) is shih (poetry); and that of the Sung Dynasty (960-1278) is tz'u (lyrics); and that of the Yüan Dynasty is ch'ü (songs or drama).

With reference to the meaning the ch'ü (songs), like the lyrics of the Sung Dynasty, is poetry set to a musical tune to be sung. Although the patterns of the tunes are numerous, the songs can be classified into two main groups: The hsiao-ling, an individual song set to a single tune; and the t'ao-shu, a suite or chain of songs made up of two or more tunes, but set only in a musical key or mode. It is this t'ao-shu (suite of chain of songs) that is incorporated in the Yüan drama forming the singing part (arias).

The Yüan drama had other component parts besides songs. There is the dialogue, spoken in the vernacular of the time. There are also poems to be recited or chanted. Then there is the acting part including movements and gestures to help in the full presentation of the whole story on the stage.》

A survey of the history of Chinese literature indicates that there are two different bodies of literature developed side by side, that of the common folk which was less known and usually hidden in the far

corners behind the official, printed anthologies. In the *Book of Poetry* (Shih Ching) the earliest extant body of Chinese literature, for instance, there are a large number of odes believed to be folksongs of the time whose authorship was unknown. Even during the long period of classical poetry (4th to 10th centuries) when the so-called 5-word style produced such famous poets as, T'ao Ch'ien, Li Po, Tu Fu and so on, there were also folk songs or poems composed by unknown authors. The main criterion in differentiating the intellectuals' literature from the common folk literature is the language used. In China, as is commonly known, there are two types of languages used as media in literature, the classical (or literary) language and the vernacular (colloquial). The classical language is undoubtedly "created" by the so-called intellectual class who, from the beginning of China's history, has been playing a very significant hand in the total development of China's culture. Important works and documents, whether in history, philosophy or literature, were all written by the scholars in the classical language. The vernacular language, that is the language of the common people, was seldom found in ancient periods.

The actual development of the colloquial literature did not happen until late in the T'ang Dynasty, where certain Buddhist activities were linked to its emergence. At that time, Buddhist priests, in order to preach the Buddhist doctrines to the common people, began to give public narrations and lectures on Buddhist tales in the vernacular language. The popularization of such activities had later led to the development of other narrating and singing (performing) activities in large urban centers such as the capital cities. During the Sung period (10th to 13th centuries), records about the two capitals, Pienliang (modern Kaifeng) of the Northern Sung and Linan (modern Hangchow) of the Southern Sung,³ all contain certain detailed accounts of the various activities, including narration of tales (historical, secular as well as Buddhist) and miscellaneous drama, which were well developed and received in the entertainment districts of those cities. Of those variety shows the story-telling and miscellaneous drama became the forerunners of the colloquial literature.

Colloquial literature was some sort of transformation from an oral form into a written form. The two leading genres are fiction and drama, both were originally narrating and performing arts presented in the vernacular tongue, and consequently into the literary scene. The so-called "promptbooks" (hua-pen 話本 in Chinese) used by the story-

tellers in the Sung time as some sort of notes were actually the crude form of the vernacular fiction, later developed in the Ming Dynasty.⁴

By the time of the early Yüan Dynasty the "miscellaneous drama" had become a full-fledged stage show in theatre as a very popular form of entertainment, whose written records became another important genre in Chinese colloquial literature. Records show that the Yüan drama (or better called "opera" or "musical") had possessed all the attributes any drama should possess, such as, the employment of major and minor roles, division into acts (or scenes) in a play, presentation of a complete story in different episodes (the plot); stage movements and gestures (dancing and mimes), plus the singing part (aria). Since it was only the beginning form of the dramatic art, the Yuan drama could not but have its limitations, such as, dividing the play uniformly into four acts (though in some cases, an additional scene called "wedge" is inserted), only in one major role (either a male or female role) does the singing, with minor roles doing the dialogue, and the simplicity of the plot, etc. These limitations (if not shortcomings) were not necessary due to the fact that the Yüan drama was nothing but a crude form of a budding art. The fact that it was also an entertainment staged in a certain society for a certain audience may also attribute to its "primitiveness". In his discussion on the audience of the Yüan drama, Professor Kojiro Yoshigawa has identified them as the citizen class (merchants, craftsmen and peasants), as well as the ruling class (the Mongols),⁵ whose lack of education or limited education may be the main reason for the use of the vernacular language in the plays. The vernacular language was also used as the official vehicle by the Mongols in official communications. Many Chinese classical works had been translated into the vernacular before they were used as texts for the Yüan Court.⁶

Not only was the simple, colloquial language used by the playwrights in their drama in order to satisfy their audience, simple and popular tales were also adopted as the basic plot for their plays. One of the main sources of the drama was the folk tales narrated by story-tellers at marketplaces. The common citizens had either heard them or read about them in written (or printed) forms. The familiarity with the story (and the plot) on the part of the audience, was an important reason for the popularization of this new art. Familiar tales from such popular fiction as *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (San-kuo-yen-i 三國演義), *The Story of the Swamp*

(Shui-hu Chuan 水滸傳), and *The Case of Lord Pao* (Lung-t'u kung-an 龍圖公案), which had been narrated repeatedly by story-tellers for hundreds of years before the Yüan, all became raw materials for the plots of the drama.⁷

It is perhaps for the same reason (easy for the audience to follow and understand), that the principle of simplicity was applied in the division of roles. In a play, there is but one major role, either a male (call *mo* 末) or a female (call *tan* 旦) who is also doing the singing. The rest are minor roles who take part in the dialogue.

The most important feature in the Yüan drama is its arias or songs. The songs are poetic lyrics set to musical tunes. But, unlike other lyrics or poems in the past ages, the songs of the Yüan are composed in the colloquial language. Unfortunately most of the musical scores were lost, only certain tunes and a small number of arias can be found.⁸

The four plays translated in this volume are not randomly selected, but chosen from the repertoire of four great dramatists, Kuan Han-ch'ing Ma Chih-yüan, Cheng Te-hui and Po jen-fu, who, as a group are commonly and respectfully called the "Four Masters of the Yuan Drama". Because of the despiteful attitude of traditional historians (classical scholars) against the popular literature (chiefly fiction and drama), the official dynastic histories they compiled did not contain any data on these playwrights. The most reliable and earliest source on these dramatists in the *Lu Kui pu* (錄鬼簿 "A Ledger of Ghosts Recorded") compiled by Chung T'zu-ch'eng 鍾嗣成; of the late Yüan. In his book, Chung divided the ch'ü writers into song writers and playwrights. The playwrights were further subdivided by Chung into: (1) those of the old generation deceased (2) those among his contemporaries deceased whom he knew personally (3) and those among his contemporaries whom he did not know; (4) those contemporaries still living with whom he was acquainted; and (5) those living with whom he was not acquainted. Of one hundred and one playwrights he recorded in his book, eighty-six were deceased, only twenty-five were still living at the time when Chung T'zu-ch'eng wrote his book.

Three of the four great masters, namely Kuan Han-ch'ing, Ma Chih-yüan and Po Jen-fu were among the fifty-six playwrights of "the old generation deceased" whom Chung never got to know; only Cheng Te-hui belonged to "those contemporaries deceased" whom Chung knew personally. Thus chronologically the four writers should be listed in such order as Kuan, Ma, Po and Cheng.

According to Chung Tz'u-ch'eng, Kuan Han-ch'ing was a man of Ta-tu (Capital of the Yüan Court), served as an official in the Imperial Hospital. He had another name, I-chai-sou. He wrote a total of fifty-six plays. Recently, however, scholars such as Wang Kuo-wei (1877-1927) believed that Kuan was perhaps the first man who started this new genre. Wang writes, "Though the name 'miscellaneous drama' had been mentioned before in the T'ang and Sung eras, it was not until in the Yüan time that Kuan Han-ch'ing first created this new style. When Chung Tz'u-ch'eng wrote *The Ledger of Ghosts Recorded* to list the dramatists, he placed Han-ch'ing at the very first. Later in the Ming Dynasty, Prince Ning-hsien (Chu Ch'üan) wrote *T'ai-ho cheng-yin p'u* (太和正音譜 'The Correct Song Patterns of T'ai-ho'), in which he placed Ma Chih-yüan at the first spot. However, under Kuan Han-ch'ing, he added, 'He was the creator of the miscellaneous drama.' Both of them agreed that Kuan Han-ch'ing had created the drama style."⁹ Though a large number of his plays have been lost, the extant ones numbered seventeen are still the largest of all the Yüan plays surviving.

Ma Chih-yüan, according to Chung Tz'u-ch'eng, was also a man of Ta-tu. He had a literary (courtesy) name, Tung-li, and served in the Chiang-che Province as an administrative officer. Chung listed twelve plays authored by Ma, of which seven survived. Among the critics, Prince Ning-hsien of the Ming (Chu Ch'üan) praised Ma Chih-yüan as the best of all the Yüan playwrights. This was, of course, his personal opinion and therefore should not be considered as authoritative conclusion.

Po Jen-fu had a single name, P'u. He was the son of Po Wen-chü, a man of Chen-ting (in modern Hopei Province). He was respectively called Master Lan-ku, and was posthumously granted a title. The play translated here is one of the fifteen recorded by Chung in his *Ledger of Ghosts*.

Cheng Te-hui was one of Chung's acquaintances who died earlier. Cheng Te-hui's given name was Kuang-tsu. He was a native of Hsiang-ling (in modern Hunan Province). He was appointed as an official serving the Hangchow district. He was a square and straight-forward man, and did not mingle with people easily. Because of this he was generally disliked by his contemporaries. But those who knew him long enough would find him a man of passion very few people could match. When he died of long illness, his body was cremated and buried

in the Ling-chih Monastery by the West Lake (in Hangchow). Many among his friends came to the funeral and eulogized him with poems or essays. His writings were numerous and well-known in the country, so his name was heard in every household. In the theatre circle he was revered as Old Master Cheng by actors and actresses.¹⁰

Of the four plays selected from the repertoire of these four masters, three of them, namely, Kuan's *Tou O Was Wronged*, Cheng's *Ch'ien-nü's Soul Left Her Body* and Po's *Rain on the Wu-t'ung Trees*, should be called masterpieces of the Yüan drama. Ma's *Yüeh-yang Tower* may not be his masterpiece, yet it is representative of his favorite theme—supernatural drama with a Taoistic twist, which was also emphasized by other playwrights.¹¹ Professor Wang Kuo-wei remarks, "In the Yüan drama I can mention three masterpieces, namely, Ma Chih-yüan's *Han kung ch'iu* (Autumn in the Palace of the Han), Po Jen-fu's *Wu-t'ung yü* (Rain on the Wu-t'ung Trees) and Cheng Te-hui's *Ch'ien-nü li hun* (Ch'ien-nü's Soul Left Her Body). Ma's play is powerful and strong; Po's is sad and melancholy; and Cheng's is delicate and romantic. They were indeed excellent pieces of literature in Chinese history. If we place all the literature of the entire Yüan era on one side of the scale, and place these on the other, I am sure the scale would be tilted to the other side."¹²

These four plays do represent important types and themes of the Yüan drama. Kuan's *Tou O Was Wronged* is a tragedy, revealing the unjust and corrupt society of the time. Ma's play belongs to a kind of supernatural fantasy, playing up the Taoist principle of immortality. Cheng's drama is an unusual love story between a young woman and a young man, suggesting that true love can have a happy ending. Po's play is a dramatization of a historic event implying the futile love of a king and his queen. Since the Yüan drama, like other literary genres developed in other eras, is considered the most representative work of the Yüan time, and since it is one of the two literary genres (the other being fiction) in the colloquial literature, we believe that this volume may serve a purpose of introducing this type of literature to readers of the English-speaking world.

Richard F. S. Yang
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

1971

1. For a brief discussion on the development of drama in the Yüan Dynasty, see the article entitled "The Social Background of the Yüan Drama", MONUMENTA SERICA, Vol. XVIII, 1958, pp. 331-333.
2. *Ibid.*
3. There are at least five different records about the Sung capitals. On the Eastern Capital, (present K'aifeng) there is Mang Yuan-lao's *Tung-ching Meng Hua Lu* (東京夢華錄, Dreams of the Prosperous Eastern Capital). On the Capital of the Southern Sung, Linan (present Hangchow), there are Nai-te-weng's *Tu-ch'eng chi shang* (都城紀勝 Records of the Glorious Days of the Capital), Hsi-hu Lao-jei's (Old Man of West Lake) *Fan-sheng lu* (繁勝錄, Records of the Prosperities), Chon Mi's *Wu-lin chiu-shih* (武林舊事, Old Things of Wu-lin) and Wu Tzu-mu's *Meng-liang lu* (夢梁錄, Records of Dreams). All of these records have been compiled and put together into a single volume by the first title, published in 1957 by the Ku-tien Wen-hsieh Ch'u-pan she or Classical Literature Publishing House, Shanghai.
4. See the introduction in "Eight Colloquial Tales of the Sung" 宋人話本八種, translated and annotated by Richard F. S. Yang, to be published soon by the same press.
5. See 吉川幸次郎 元雜劇研究, (Chinese translation by 鄭清茂), (藝文, 台北, 1960), Vol. 1, Chapter 1, pp. 44-71.
6. *Ibid.*, Chapter 4 on 元雜劇的文章 —pp. 242-243.
7. See Yoshikawa's Chapter on 元雜劇的構成 (上), Chapter 1, Vol. 2, *Ibid.*, pp. 178-188, he has given a detailed analysis on the sources of the drama material.
8. For the musical tunes of the songs of the Yüan, see the Article entitled "The Poetic Songs of the Yüan" by Richard F. S. Yang, David M. Y. Hsiang and Myrtle L. Yang, in "Chinese Culture Quarterly", Vol. XI, No. 1, March 1970 Taipei, pp. 82-123.
9. See Wang Kuo-wei's 王國維, 戲曲散論, incorporated in 王國維戲曲論文集, (Peiping, 1957), p. 252. For a more detailed discussion on Kuan Han-ch'ing and his drama see the forthcoming book entitled "*Kuan Han-ch'ing, China's First and Foremost Dramatist*."
10. All this information is found in Cheng's book whose annotated editions by Wang Kuo-wei is incorporated in Wang's Collected Works, *IBID.*, pp. 292-321.
11. For a discussion on the impact of Taoist religion on the Yüan drama, see the translator's two articles, one entitled "The Social Background of the Yüan Drama" in MONUMENTA SERICA, Vol. XVII, 1958, pp. 331-352 and the other entitled "On the Origin of the Legend of the Eight Immortals" in ORIENTAL EXTREMUS-Vol. 5 No. 1, 1958, pp. 1-22
12. See Wang Kuo-wei, *IBID.*, p. 276, in his 錄曲餘談 ('Remarks on the Recording of Songs')

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The translator wishes to express his heartfelt appreciation to his former colleague, Dr. Herbert M. Stahl, Professor of Drama of the University of Southern California, who not only read through the draft, but also made a number of corrections and changes in order to make the English smooth and readable.

Appreciation is also due to my good friends, Mr. Y. P. Huang and his charming wife, Nancy, Publishers of the CHINA POST, whose brilliant idea of translating representative works of Chinese literature has resulted in the publication of this volume.

R. F. S. Y.
1971, Pittsburgh

- 1 1
32. The expression here. "roaming with wind and thunder" alludes to a man when he rises above the rest of his peers with his ambitions realized.
 33. This tune, Yao-min-ko, is so composed that the ten numerals from ten to one are incorporated in its verse.
 34. The Phoenix Pond was located inside the Royal Palace in the olden days in China. Thus the term usually alludes to the situation when a man, having passed the palace examinations, could mingle with high officials in the royal court.
 35. This reference is to the scholar K'uang Heng of the Han Dynasty. K'uang was very poor, but was very fond of reading books. Because there was no light in his house at night, he knocked a hole in the wall of his neighbor so that he could steal some light from his neighbor's candle.
 36. This is a story related to Lu Meng-cheng of the Sung Dynasty. He was so poor that he had to go to a local monastery to beg for meals. In one of the poems he later wrote, there was the line, "Cleaning the ashes gathered during the night in a cold stove."
 37. This is a story about Chang Hao of the Sung Dynasty. At youth, he once estranged at a monastery named Happiness-Bestowing Temple. Pitying his poverty, the monks in the temple decided to rub epitaph written by a famous Tang scholar and calligrapher, Yen Chen-ch'ing, and gave Chang Hao as traveling expense. Unfortunately, Chang had tough luck, for at night a thunder storm shattered that stone monument on which the epitaph was carved.
 38. According to the ancient custom, especially during the Han time, when a man was given a high position in the Court, he would be given the honor of riding in a huge carriage with a huge canopy on top draped in silk, and two rows of honor guards clothed in red, bright colored costumes would parade in front of the horses.
 39. This expression comes from a remark made by Hsiang Yü, known as King Pa of the West Ch'u State when he was vying for power with Liu Pang, later Emperor Kao-tsu of the Han Dynasty, when he remarked, "If one does not return to his native home when he becomes rich and noble, it would be like one walking in dark wearing silk clothes." Later in the Sung time, Han Ch'i reversed what Hsiang Yü had remarked and he called his house "Daylight Silk Hall."
 40. The story here refers to a legend in ancient times in China. According to legendary tale, the princess of King Shu fell in love with her nurse's son. They had secretly agreed to meet in a Zoroastrian Temple. When the princess went there, she found that the young man named Ch'en had fallen asleep. Thus she went back to her palace. When Ch'en woke up, he learned that his lover had left him. His anger became a flame of fire which burned himself and the temple up.
 41. In ancient custom, after a candidate passed his palace examinations, a cinnamon branch was usually broken and given to the candidate as a token of congratulation.