

Introduction

Ch'unhyang ka is Korea's favorite story. No one knows when it was first told or who told it, but every Korean alive knows both the plot and the characters intimately. The tale had been told thousands of times: in Korean and Chinese, in verse and in prose, as opera, drama, film and musical comedy; in cartoons, and in elegant embroidery on screens and scrolls. It has become part of Korea's folk heritage. Namwŏn, the town in Chŏlla province where the tale is set, thrives on the tourist trade attracted by Ch'un-hyang. There is no proof that she ever existed, but in Namwŏn there is a shrine to her where sacrifices are offered. Nothing could demonstrate more effectively the importance of the story in Korean tradition.

The tale is simple. An aristocrat's son falls in love with the daughter of a kisaeng. They marry secretly, and are parted when the boy's father is transferred to a new post in the capital. Another governor is appointed in the town who tries to take the girl into his household, but she refuses, despite cruel beatings, and is imprisoned. Meanwhile the boy attains government rank as an inspector and returns to punish the lecherous governor and deliver his faithful wife. It is a tale which blends eroticism and sadism under the twin banners of justice and morality. Popular literature knows no surer recipe for success.

The history of the text is so entangled that, although every important collection of Korean books has significant versions in woodblock or manuscript, the relations between them are barely clear. The consensus of opinion is that Ch'un-hyang was first heard of in a story sung by the wandering players of old Korea, the *kwangdae*, reciting a form of rhythmic chanted narrative now called *p'ansori*. The oldest version which is reliably datable is *Ch'unhyang ka* (Song of Ch'un-hyang) written as a long poem in Chinese by Yu Chin-han in 1754. How

long the story had been in existence before that is sheer guesswork.

No other text can be certainly dated earlier than the nineteenth century, and most of them belong to a date later than 1860. Different traditions are discernible in the woodblock texts printed in Seoul (with related editions from Anŏng, a town in the capital province) and those printed at Ch'önju, an important town in Ch'ölla province. Two famous versions for singing were written by the well-known music teacher Sin Chae-hyo between 1866 and 1884. These and the many manuscripts show differences which have been compared with great diligence by Professor Kim Tong-uk (*Ch'unhyang-jön yön'gu*, 1965) but their chronological relationships resist definitive clarification.

There have been several English versions of *Ch'unhyang*. The only one which is a translation is that published in the *Korea Magazine* in eleven instalments from September 1917 to July 1918. It was the work of Dr. James Gale, the distinguished Canadian missionary and lexicographer. He made a faithful rendering of Yi Hae-jō's *Okchunghwa*, published in 1911. Others have translated modern rewritings of the tale, or used older texts but departed widely from them.

I have here made a new and complete translation of the Ch'önju woodblock edition. It is usually referred to as the *Wamp'an*, 'printed in Wanjū' (Wanjū is a literary name for Ch'önju). In recent years this text has attracted most attention from Korean scholars. It is the longest and fullest of the old versions. There is a convenient modern facsimile and reprint of the woodblock edition (Seoul, Ehwa University, 1958) and several modern annotated editions, of which that by Professor Yi Ka-wŏn (1957) is perhaps the best.

The title of the *Wamp'an* edition is *Yŏllyŏ Ch'unhyang sujŏl ka* (Song of the Constancy of the Faithful Wife, Ch'un-hyang). Other versions have such titles as *Ch'unhyang chŏn* (Story of Ch'unhyang—the most widely-used in common parlance), *Honam akpu* (Song of Ch'ölla), and *Okchunghwa* ('The flower in the prisonhouse'—a twentieth-century invention). All these titles emphasize either the local setting of the story, or the heroine and the center of the romance. Calling Ch'un-hyang a faithful wife puts the story into an acceptable category of improving tales that the orthodox Confucianism of Korea could happily accept; but this high moral tone has less emotive effect than the elemental story of romance, separation, suffering and deliverance, which is the real artistic and psychological power of the Ch'unhyang legend. It is a classic expression of the love and redemption theme, and its spiritual roots go far deeper into human experience than Confucianism ever reaches.

Some writers pay great attention to the social criticism implied in the story: the problem of marriage across class boundaries, the plight of the countryfolk under a bad governor, the cheekiness of the servants, and other points showing sympathy for the oppressed rural population. This interpretation is a reading back into last century's Korea of preoccupations that did not develop until later. There were the nineteenth-century peasant revolts in Korea, and there were even older satires against the aristocracy; *Ch'unhyang ka* shows concern about social injustice; but this concern is incidental to its main purpose. Marriage across class boundaries is a necessary device of the plot, and the remarks about the plight of the farmers come naturally from the fact that the hero is a government inspector. The book is remarkably free of true social satire, in strong contrast to the virulent satire of the Korean mask plays.

The literary style is not scholarly, but it presupposes education. Many of the jokes depend on a knowledge of Chinese characters, and it is packed with Chinese literary allusions and poetic quotations which would be meaningless to real peasants.

Nevertheless it is not a book to be read, but a text for a storyteller or reciter, or for performance by a small group of entertainers. Even in English translation it is clear that the style of composition differs in various sections of the work. Especially in the earlier parts there are long sections of lyrical descriptive writing, much of it heavily Chinese in style. These are designed for charmed or recitative performance. At various points there are songs in a more purely Korean style—the love-songs, Ch'unhyang's songs and the farmers' songs—which are also texts for singing. The thread of the story is kept up in swift and lucid prose, but is interspersed with long monologues in rhythmic prose and dramatic conversations which, especially in the closing pages, sometimes move with impressionistic speed and lightness of touch. *Ch'unhyang ka* is in the strict sense of the word a melodrama, a drama with singing.

The structure of the work in some respects resembles a film scenario. (One recent film used the text almost as it stands, and with great success.) It falls naturally into four sections. In many forms of entertainment the acts get shorter as the play progresses, and in *Ch'unhyang ka* the first section is by far the longest: the story of the meeting and marriage of the hero and heroine. It has the most ornate prose and the tenderest love passages, full of frank eroticism which uses imagery to create an effect at once sensuous and playful, tinged with innocence and genuine love. The second section tells of their part-

ing, the third of Ch'un-hyang's sufferings and constancy under the new governor; here are the passages least likely to appeal to Western taste in their melodramatic pathos and sadistic violence. The last section describes the heroine's deliverance by her husband, bringing the tale to a close with brisk narrative and dialogue. The whole has the pattern of a sonata with movements marked *Allegretto amoroso*, *Largo lacrimoso*, and *Allegro vivace*. This structure is simple and episodic. It shows no true development, no complications of plot which have to be solved: all moves in a single line. Interest is sustained by elaboration of themes and by the insertion of purple passages and songs.

Many of these descriptions and songs are in that favorite traditional Korean form, the list or litany, part of whose ancestry is the Chinese *fu*. The litanies may be built round puns, which are abundant in Korean because of the immense vocabulary based on Chinese homonyms: for instance, the songs on the puns for *love*, *palace* and *farewell*. The lists are usually opulent—the hero's clothes, the food and wine on a table, a roll of beautiful women, lists of Korean beauty spots, even an exciting list of the towns passed through on a long journey. These compositions have a joy and zest which are paralleled in many Korean folk songs. Narrative ballads are less important in Korea than counting songs, alphabet songs (the hero's explanation of the primer in *Ch'unhyang ka* is essentially an alphabet song) topographical catalogues and commented lists of people and things.

The episodic structure makes for a loosely-knit work. Whole sections could be omitted without damaging its unity; and the time scheme of the story is sketchy, even at some points confused and contradictory. There are two different accounts of Ch'un-hyang's birth, two different dates (springtime and *Tano*, which is summer) for the beginning of the love affair; the honeymoon cottage of the early section is suddenly given a proper name only in the last few pages. Clearly the book was not composed by a single author, and for that reason, if for no other, it is misleading to call it a novel.

The western reader who expects the intellectual texture and development of character that are essential aspects of the western novel will not find them in *Ch'unhyang ka*. Instead he will find the qualities of the romance: simply-defined issues, broadly-drawn characters, exciting incident relieved by comic interludes. Ch'un-hyang herself is an uncomplicated person: we know only that she is stubborn, beautiful, and truthful—all that a well-bred girl would wish to be. Her lover, Yi Mong-nyong, is no more clearly individuated: he is a model son and lover, handsome and clever and good. They each have a servant, much

as Shakespeare's heroes and heroines have corresponding attendants of a lower class, but Ch'un-hyang's maid and Mong-nyong's valet are not developed into a sub-plot; their purpose is purely dramatic, to give the leading characters someone to talk to. Ch'un-hyang's mother says, or sings, a great deal, but does not emerge as anything more than a shrewd old woman. Mong-nyong's father appears only in one ironical scene such as is otherwise provided by lower-class characters from the yamen offices. The villain, Pyön Hak-to, is a tyrant and no more. The minor characters are all more or less humorous, from the corrupt secretaries to the pathetic soothsayer and the venal guards.

Yet this simplicity builds up into the strong effect that *Ch'unhyang ka* has on its Korean audience. Especially when recited with music, the repetition of images, the inner consistency of each of the characters, the insistence on the elemental emotions of each incident—the beauty of the spring landscape, the love of the two youngsters, the bitterness of parting, the agonies of torture and waiting, the turmoil of the scene of deliverance and the peacefulness of the ending—all combine and fuse to create one of those works of popular art whose inspiration is derived less from the skill of the artist than from the demands of the audience. From its beginning in spring to its end in the harvest of another autumn, *Ch'unhyang-ga* is an intense and unified experience.

NOTES

This translation has been made to be read and enjoyed, to give the pleasure intended by the original. The following notes are intended to help the reader find the flavor of Korean literature without being cloyed and hampered by too much detail.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND

The political setting

During the Yi dynasty (fifteenth to nineteenth century) Korea had a strictly Confucian polity. The king was supreme and sole ruler, but the country was administered by an elite of scholar-officials. These held all executive posts in capital and countryside, and were frequently transferred from one post to another to ensure that they did not become entrenched. Yi Mong-nyong's father and Pyön Hak-to are members of this class. Lower ranks in the administration were not moved from

post to post, but served the changing governors and magistrates, forming a stable local bureaucracy. Government was often corrupt; the governors milked their districts for all they were worth, and the underlings were experts in bribery and squeeze. These were the staff of the local government offices, or yamen, who play such an important role in *Ch'unhyang ka*.

The king occasionally appointed secret inspectors (*amhaeng ōsa*) to travel incognito and detect misgovernment. The inspectors' insignia were a heavy round brass plaque with a design of horses on it, and a brass yardstick. Yi Mong-nyong is made a secret inspector in *Ch'unhyang ka*, and the description of the office is realistic.

Social classes were clearly delineated. There was no hereditary nobility, but there was an hereditary aristocratic class (*yangban*) which alone could aspire to government service above the level of clerks.

Korean living

Most of the references to Korean life are self-explanatory. Koreans still use little furniture. Chairs were practically unknown in the times of *Ch'unhyang ka*; people sat on the floor, and the wealthier ones used cushions. Bedding was laid out on the floor, which was warmed by flues underneath in cold weather. Meals were arranged in the kitchen on low tables and the food-laden table carried in and set before the diner.

Long distances were measured in *li*. Ten *li* approximated to one hour's walking distance.

The *yang* was the Chinese or Korean dollar, the largest silver coin that was used.

Kisaeng

Kisaeng were lower-class women trained in literature, music and dancing as entertainers for men of the upper classes. They were often but not always courtesans. The ambivalence of Ch'un-hyang's social position as the daughter of an aristocrat and a kisaeng is crucial to her story. The version translated here lays more stress than some others do on her aristocratic parentage and gentle upbringing.

Names of the characters

Koreans avoid the use of names and prefer to substitute titles or relationship-terms for them. It seems that in the earliest version Ch'un-hyang was the only character to be named. Ch'un-hyang means

'spring fragrance', and is a highly romantic invention. It is the type of name given to kisaeng—there is a list of such names in the middle of the story and her mother's name, Wŏl-mae, 'moonlit plumblossom', is another example. The maid's name, Hyang-dan, 'fragrant cinnamon', is of the same kind.

The hero was originally called Yi Tŏryŏng. This is still the popular way of referring to him. *Tŏryŏng* was a respectful form of address and title for an unmarried youth of good family, but is untranslatable in modern English. In some versions of the story he is called Yŏng, and in others Ch'un-dŭk. The name Mong-nyong, 'dream dragon', and the incident of Wŏl-mae's dream about it are late additions, but are now firmly established in the popular mind.

His servant is described in Korean as a *pangja*. A *pangja* was a servant attached to a provincial yamen. I have called him a valet, even though this is not an accurate translation, in order to distinguish him from other servants and 'boys'. *Pangja* has disappeared from the vocabulary of modern Korean, and many Koreans are now mistakenly convinced that the word is a proper name, but it is unquestionably a title. Modern feeling about the story has magnified the *pangja*'s role, often excluding other servants. It has not only made him a wit who outshines his master, but has also given him a romance of his own, so that he ends up marrying Ch'un-hyang's maid, Hyang-dan. The *Wamp'an* version makes less of the *pangja* than some of the other texts do, but in the traditional story he is a necessary minor character and no more. The modern enlargement of his part in films and rewritings of the story is a legitimate development from his pertness in the older versions, and an interesting demonstration of the ability of such a story to keep its place in the Korean mind by changing with the times.

The age of the protagonists

Ip'al ch'ŏngch'un, 'Twice eight green spring-time', is the conventional phrase used to describe the age of Mong-nyong and Ch'un-hyang at the time of their meeting. This is literally sixteen, but making allowance for the Oriental method of reckoning age, I have translated it as fifteen. It is the same age as that of Pao-yueh, the hero of the *Dream of the Red Chamber*, and of Shao-yu in the *Nine Cloud Dream*. It compares favorably with the age of Shakespeare's Juliet. In nineteenth-century Korea it would not have been considered an early age for marriage. Many boys were married at twelve.

The punishment

The punishment scene has some obscurities.

The executioner deliberately chooses a paddle that will break easily so that he can break it and pretend to beat Ch'un-hyang much harder than he really does. He loudly declares that he will be merciless, but quietly tells her he will make the beating as light as possible so long as she screams and reacts violently—joining him in a pretence of fierce torture. This vignette of another kind of corruption does not fit well with the ensuing songs of exquisite pain; but the audience would want to feel that the executioner was soft while at the same time it would not want to be spared any of the possible agonies of the torture.

The cangue was a large and heavy board with a hole near one end, through which the prisoner's neck was inserted. The opening was sealed behind the prisoner's head. While it was being worn the prisoner was forced to sit or squat, because the cangue made walking impossible, unless someone else took the weight of it; and of course the prisoner could not lie down.

LITERARY BACKGROUND

The place of Chinese literature

In Korea at the time of *Ch'unhyang ka* the only education given to anyone was in Chinese grammar and literature, much as Latin grammar was the staple of medieval European education. So great was Koreans' reverence for the Ming dynasty that they even produced the legend, referred to near the beginning of *Ch'unhyang ka*, that the first Ming emperor had been born while his parents were living in Korea. Hence when Yi Mong-nyong goes home to read books he reads the Chinese classics, eventually spending most time on the *Ch'ŏnja-mun* (*T'ien-tzu-wen*) or Thousand Character Classic, which was the traditional primer of all Korean boys. It consists of 250 four-character lines of Chinese verse, in which no character is ever repeated. His long explanation of the opening verses, character by character, begins in high style but deteriorates into erotic fantasy. The whole episode illuminates the place of the book in Korean education in a pleasantly humorous way. Because it is a primer *Ch'ŏnja-mun* is the only book the *pangja* claims to know anything about.

The peak of Chinese study was reading and writing poetry in Chinese, according to the rules of Chinese prosody. It was a favorite pastime for all the members of a party to write verses on the same subject with the same rhyming words, in a kind of poetic contest. This is done at the governor's birthday feast in *Ch'unhyang ka*, though we

are given the text of Yi Mong-nyong's verses only.

Such poems were usually written in conscious imitation of Tang and Sung poets. Li Po, Tu Fu, Su Tung-p'o and Po Chu-i were for Koreans the poets *par excellence*. Most of the verse quoted in *Ch'unhyang ka* is from Li Po or some other of the T'ang poets. A notable exception is the first stanza of the first song in the ancient *Shih ching* (Book of Songs). This marriage song, undoubtedly because it is the first in the book, was the best-known poem in the *Shih ching* and widely quoted. In *Ch'unhyang ka* the verse *fitting partner for a lord* is quoted so frequently that it becomes a refrain. Mong-nyong's restlessness when waiting to see Ch'un-hyang again (*longing, longing, he tossed and fidgeted*) and Wŏl-mae's remark about a happy marriage (*with lutes and guitars*) are from the same poem.

References to Chinese stories are so numerous in *Ch'unhyang ka* that full annotation of them in a translation would only be pedantic. Fortunately the purpose of most of the allusions is self-evident, so that annotations are not necessary for the general reader. Though they appear rich and varied to the Westerner who approaches them for the first time they in fact represent a limited and romantic repertoire. Most of them can be reduced to a few categories:

1) FAMOUS BEAUTIES. Yang Kuei-fei, the plump and extravagant concubine of the Emperor Hsian Tsung of Tang. Because of her pathetic end, executed at the roadside, and in spite of her profligacy, she has become East Asia's paramount symbol of beauty and pathos.

Wang Chao-chün was a concubine in the harem of the Han Emperor Yüan-ti. She earned the hatred of a minister, Mao, who by skillful use of a false portrait succeeded in keeping her from the emperor. Eventually she was used as a bribe to persuade a barbarian Khan to withdraw from Chinese soil. When she reached the boundary at the Amur River she plunged in and was drowned. Her tomb there is called the Verdant Tomb. There are several versions of this legend.

The fairy of Wu-shan occurs in the very old story of a prince who was enticed into spending a night with a fairy in the mountains of Wu-shan. On departing she said:

*At dawn I marshal the morning clouds,
And at night I summon the rain.*

From this legend the phrase 'clouds and rain' became a sobriquet for sexual intercourse.

2) CHARACTERS AND INCIDENTS FROM THE *SAN-KUO-CHI YEN-I* (Romance of the Three Kingdoms). It is not often recognized that the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is Korea's most popular work of

literature, even today. There are many more editions of it on sale than there are of *Ch'unhyang ka*. It tells of the wars between Wei, Wu and Shu in the third century AD. The heroes of the book, Kuan Yü (later canonized as the god of war), Liu Pei and Chang Fei swore the famous Oath of the Peach Orchard. Ts'ao Ts'ao is the great villain of the piece, and Chu-ko Liang is the greatest magician-sage in Chinese story.

3) LEGENDS OF THE HSIAO-HSIANG RIVERS AND THE TUNG-T'ING LAKE AREA Central China are fundamental in traditional Korean literature. In There the legendary sage-emperor Shun died and his wives O-huang and Nü-ying, weeping for him, shed tears on the bamboo stems, thus giving rise to the dappled bamboo whose stems are blotched to this day. Here is the Huang-ling shrine, famous in many poems, and nearby is the sacred mountain of Heng-shan.

4) THE LEGENDARY PRIMEVAL RULERS belong to the traditional Chinese accounts of pre-history, which tell of the three first imperial houses of Heaven, Earth, and Man; followed by Fu-hsi, who discovered divination, Shen-nung, who invented agriculture and medicine, and the Yellow Emperor. Then came Yao and Shun, the ideal rulers whom Confucius himself revered, to whom are attributed the principles of morality.

Yü of Hsia drained China of floods by nine years' labors. The Hsia dynasty ended in disgrace, but the Emperor Tang appeared to restore peace and prosperity by founding the Shang (or Yin) dynasty. Shang also deteriorated and was replaced by the state of Chou under King Wen and his son Wu. This was the state into which Confucius was born.

Two loyalists of the fall of the Shang dynasty, Po-i and Shu-ch'i, are constantly referred to by Korean writers. They refused to 'eat the grain of Chou,' the usurping dynasty, so 'refusing to eat millet' became a phrase typifying constancy.

5) THE FAIRIES OF THE WESTERN PARADISE. An ancient group of legends tells of the Queen Mother of the Western Paradise, putatively located over the mountains of Tibet. She holds court by the Lake of Gems, where the peach of immortality grows, and she uses blue birds for messengers. Her legends are related to those of the Sky God who lives in the 'Jade City of the Heavens'. In China they have blended with popular Taoism, but in Korea they were the stock material of fairy stories.

Beyond these five categories of literary allusion there are few in *Ch'unhyang ka*. The mighty and wise minister Chiang T'ai-kung is often referred to—once with his mortar made in the year, month, day and hour which all had the same designation in the cycle of sixty character combinations which were used for measuring time. (In this case it was *keng-shen*.)

All such references are simply literary; more tiresome for the translator, because they hinder the foreign reader in enjoying the wit of *Ch'unhyang ka*, are the Chinese and Korean puns. Many of these are comparable to the English schoolboy's reading of *Caesar adsum iam forte* as 'Caesar 'ad some jam for tea.' Different readings can be obtained from a Chinese phrase by writing it with different characters of the same sound, or interpreting the sounds as if they were pure Korean words. Mong-nyong enjoys a couplet which can be taken as referring either to local government or to local amours: he has an involved punning game with *suk'öök* ('secret virtue' or 'steamed rice cakes flavored with herbs') and *mok'öök* ('virtue of the element wood' or 'steamed cakes made of wood'—an absurdity).

Other puns are simpler, as when the secretary Mok deliberately puns on *chöngsüng* (minister of state) and *changsüng* (devil post), and the cawing of the rooks is interpreted as Chinese by the soothsayer. The puns of the punning songs fall somewhere between the two categories.

There are two points where understanding depends on knowing the written forms of Chinese. One occurs in Mong-nyong's love song where he describes the character for 'good', or 'to like', which is composed of two simpler characters for 'woman' and 'son'. The other is the reference to the torn inscription where the character for 'loyalty' has lost its top part ('central') so that only the bottom half ('heart') remains. Such games with Chinese logograms were an unfailing source of pleasure to Koreans.

In this translation all Chinese names referring to Chinese places and people have been transliterated as Chinese; but Chinese words used in Korean names and phrases, or as Korean puns, have been transliterated according to their Korean sounds.

Stock imagery

Much of the imagery of *Ch'unhyang ka* is repeated many times in

the course of the work. This would not strike the Korean audience as monotonous because the symbols were replete with meaning. Some of the most frequently repeated ones are:

The phoenix and the phoenix tree (often called the paulownia).

The Chinese legendary phoenix is entirely unrelated to the Egyptian and Arabian phoenix which rises again from its ashes. The Chinese phoenix, probably really derived from a Himalayan pheasant or other beautiful gallinaceous bird, is a symbol of conjugal love and fidelity. It eats only bamboo fruit and roosts only in the phoenix tree. It dances when great men appear. It is a commonplace symbol of romantic love.

The *p'eng* is another mythical bird, the Chinese equivalent of the roc, symbol of great size and strength, rising rapidly to great heights.

The mandarin duck mates for life and so becomes another symbol of married love and fidelity.

The wild goose is a symbol for a letter-carrying messenger, because of the story of the exile who tied the news of his survival to the leg of a wild goose which was shot by the emperor, thus who received the message. The goose is also a symbol of conjugal fidelity.

The cuckoo is the mourning spirit of an unfortunate dead person; there are several legends about this bird.

Cranes are mystic birds, the heavenly steeds of the immortals.

Sea-roses, the dark red *rugosa*, grow by the white sands of the east coast. Their beauty is one of the clichés of Korean poetry.

The moon dominates the whole of old Korean literature. The Kwanghal-lu is a pavilion deriving its name from the Kwanghan Palace of the moon maiden Heng-o. Moonlight suggests love and peace, but is usually tinged with sadness. In the moon there is also a cinnamon tree whose leaves confer immortality; and the Old Man of the Moonlight is responsible for fixing everybody's marriage destiny.

Willow trees are frequent in poems of love and lovers' partings.

The Herdboy and the Weaving Maid are two stars on either side of the Milky Way. They love one another but are divided by the waters of the Silver River (i.e., the Milky Way). Every year on the seventh night of the seventh moon the magpies form a living bridge over which the two can pass to meet. The Magpie Bridge outside Namwŏn is named from this legend, which is quoted by Mong-nyong at the bridge.

The Peach Blossom Valley, discovered by a fisherman who noticed peach-blossoms floating on the water, is a favorite sobriquet for fairyland or for beautiful scenery. The story comes from a prose fragment written by T'ao Ch'ien in the fourth century.

Korean literary references

The text of *Ch'unhyang ka* is sprinkled with Korean proverbs and quotations from *sjŏ* (short Korean lyrics). In some cases the quotation is direct, but often a half-quotation is dovetailed into the sentence. There are fewer Korean allusions than there are Chinese references, but enough to form a striking feature of the work.

There is also a reference to *sasŏl*, a longer and more colloquial form of Korean-language poetry. The *sasŏl*, like the *sjŏ*, are intended to be sung.

There are a few allusions to Korean writings and legends. Non'gae, the patriotic kisaeng of Chinju in the sixteenth century, who lured a Japanese officer over a riverside cliff to his death but herself died in the act, and several other famous kisaeng are mentioned. King Sejo was a mid-fifteenth century king of Korea, a devout Buddhist.

Kuwmong is alluded to twice: once when Mong-nyong in his love-song speaks of Hsing-chen and the eight fairies, and once when he is talking to the washer-girls by the bridge at Namwŏn, and lists the same nine characters under other names taken from the novel.

The Song of a Faithful Wife, Ch'un-hyang

When King Sukjong

first ascended the throne, virtue flowed out from him over all the land; the king had sons and grandsons, so the succession was assured; the times were secure and seasons harmonious as in the days of Yao and Shun; administration and culture were as efficient and flourishing as in the days of Yü and T'ang. The ministers of the crown were strong pillars of the state and the generals and marshals were faithful warriors. The good influence of the court reached the remotest countryside, peace and security reigned within the four seas. There were faithful subjects in the palace and filial sons and virtuous wives in the homes of the people. It was wonderful time! The weather was favorable, the people were well-fed and happy, and everywhere could be heard the happy songs of the farmers at work.

At this time, in Ch'olla province in the city of Namwön, there lived a kisaeng named Wöl-mae. She was famous throughout the three southern provinces, but she had retired early and was living with a gentleman named Söng. Time passed, and she was over forty years of age, but she had no children. She worried so much about this that she became ill. Then one day she suddenly remembered some stories of people of former times, and asked to see her husband. She spoke to him very respectfully, like this:

'I think I must have committed some very serious sin in a former existence. In this life I have given up singing and entertaining, become a married woman, observed all the rites and worked hard to do all that a woman should; nevertheless, I must have some great guilt, because I have not had any children. When I am dead, who will burn incense or offer sacrifices in my memory and who will look after my funeral? But if I go to pray at some famous shrine and am able to bear at least one child, the greatest sorrow of my life will be at an end.

Will you let me go?

Söng replied: 'It is true: you are very unfortunate. But if children could be had by praying, would there be any childless women?'

Wöl-mae answered: 'Confucius was the greatest sage in the world, and he went to pray at the mountain of Ni-ch'iu; Cheng Tzu-ch'an of the kingdom of Cheng prayed at the mountain of Yu-ching; and both were answered. Have we no famous mountains here in Korea? When Chu T'ien-i of Ungch'ön, in Kyöngsang Province, was old but had no children, he went to pray at the highest peak there and as a result a son was born who became the first Ming emperor. If such things can happen for the imperial house, let us see what prayer can do for us. *Don't knock down your own pagoda or trample on your own saplings.*'

From that day onward she began to purify herself with baths and fasting, and made pilgrimages to holy mountain places.

The Magpie Bridge stood out among the hills and streams on either side, protected on the northwest by Kyoryöng mountain; to the east the temple roofs of Sönwön-sa could be seen among the thick woods of Changnim; the noble peak of Chiri arose in the south; and in the middle distance flowed the Yoch'ön stream, a long curve of green water sweeping round to the southeast. It was the most beautiful place imaginable. The green of the forests covered the landscape as far as Chiri. Wöl-mae climbed to the top of Panya Peak and looked around to see famous mountains and great rivers on all sides. She built an altar on the top of the peak, set out the sacrificial dishes, chose a spot before the altar by divination and prayed there about her troubles. Perhaps the mountain spirit himself had arranged that this should be the fifth day of the fifth moon, and also the first day of a sixty-day cycle—a most auspicious day. Wöl-mae dreamed that a fairy woman shining with all the colors of the rainbow came flying to her through the air, riding on a blue crane. The fairy was crowned with flowers and dressed in iridescent colors. Her girdle ornaments tinkled sweetly and she carried a branch of cinnamon flowers, as she came up to the altar, raised her hands respectfully in greeting and said:

'I am the daughter of the Lo River. I went to the jade city of Heaven to present the peach of immortality and while I was there I met Ch'ih Sung-tzu at the Kwanghan Palace and fell deeply in love with him. Because I dallied there, God was very angry with me and cast me down to the world; but I did not know where to go, and the

mountain spirit of Turyu directed me to you. Please be kind to me.'

And she entered into Wöl-mae's bosom. 'The crane cries loud because its neck is long' they say, and its cry woke Wöl-mae up. It had all been only a dream. When she had regained her shattered senses, she talked to her husband about it. She believed that heaven was giving her a son, and indeed she conceived at that time. One day ten moons later, the room was filled with fragrance and tinted clouds when she lay in a stupor as her child was born. It was a girl. Wöl-mae had yearned long and deeply for a son, but she was delighted with the baby. What words can describe her love? She called the child Ch'un-byang, and treasured her like a piece of precious jade in the palm of her hand. The child had no equal in filial devotion and was as gentle as the *ch'i-lin* itself, the mythical unicorn. She took to book-learning at the age of seven, and the whole town praised her beauty and her virtues.

At this time there was a gentleman in Seoul, a civil official named Yi, who lived in Samch'öng-dong. He was descended from a famous family, and many of his ancestors had been loyal subjects. One day when the king was reviewing the list of meritorious subjects for new appointments, he promoted Yi from his post at Kwach'ön, near Seoul, to be prefect of Kūmsan in Ch'ölla province. Soon afterward he transferred him to higher office as governor of the city of Namwön. Yi presented himself before the king to offer thanks for his new appointment and take his leave, and set out for Namwön to take up his new post. He governed his district wisely and well. There were no disturbances or complaints, and everywhere the people rejoiced that at last they had a just governor. Life was like a fairy-tale: there was peace and plenty, the people did their duty; it was like the days of Yao and Shun all over again.

What time of year was it? It was springtime, the cheerful season. The swifts and swallows and all the other birds had found their mates and flew hither and thither in pairs, twittering. Spring was in the air. Flowers covered the south mountain, and the north mountain too was pink with flowers; the golden orioles called to each other among the myriad fronds of the weeping willows. All the trees were in full leaf

and the cuckoos were calling; it was the loveliest time of the year.

The governor's son, young master Yi, was now fifteen years old. He was as handsome as Tu Mu, he was as generous as the ocean is wide, and wonderfully clever: a Li Po for composing verses and a Wang Hsi-chih for calligraphy. One day he called his valet and said: 'Where are the local beauty-spots? Poetry and spring-time go together; tell me where the most beautiful places are.'

The valet replied: 'The young master is supposed to be studying, not going out to look at beauty-spots.'

The boy said: 'That just shows how ignorant you are. From ancient times great writers have always gone to beautiful places for inspiration. They are the basis of lyric poetry. The fairy spirits also travel round from place to place. How dare you say going out is wrong? Szu-ma Chiang, when he was traveling southward by boat on the Yangtze and Hui Rivers, was sailing against the stream; a cold wind was howling, and from this experience he wrote about the continual changing of all created things, always surprising, sometimes delightful, sometimes gentle, always material for poetry. Li Po was the greatest genius among poets, and went for pleasure outings on the Ts'aisih River; Su Tung-p'o delighted in moonlit nights at the Red Cliff; Po Chü-i sang of the moon shining at night on the Hsin-yang River; King Sejo liked to visit Munjang-dae in Songni-san, near P'ü'n.'

The valet caught the boy's mood and began to list the beauty-spots of the whole country: 'If you go to Seoul, outside the Purple Mist Gate there are the Seven Stars Hermitage, the Green Lotus Hermitage, and the Sword-washing Pavilion; at P'yöng yang are the Pavilion of Martial Glory, the Taedong River Pavilion, and the Peony Peak; Yangyang has Naksan Temple; Songni-san at P'ü'n has Munjang-dae, the Library Rocks; Anü has the Fair View Terrace; Chingju the Piled Rocks Pavilion; Miryang, the Yöngnam Pavilion. I have no idea what any of them are like, but here in Ch'ölla province we have the Arbor of Diffused Fragrance at T'aein, the Cold Winds Pavilion at Muju, and the Cold Jade Pavilion at Ch'önju. They are all beautiful, but listen to the glories of Namwön: you can go out of the East Gate, and there in the woods of Changnim is Sönwön Temple; you can go out of the West Gate to the temple of Kwan Yü, the god of war, where the fierce and terrible spirit of the ancient heroes seems to linger still; you can go out of the South Gate, to Kwanghal-lu, the Pavilion of Paradise, where the Magpie Bridge and the Sea Islands Kiosk are marvellous to see; or you can go out of the North Gate, where the fortress on Kyoryöng Mountain stands out above the strange shapes

of the rocks like a golden lotus piercing the azure sky. Where would you like to go?

The boy said: 'Come on! Everybody says that Kwanghal-lu and the Maggie Bridge are wonderful; let's go and see.'

See what the lad does. He goes in before his father, the governor, bows politely and says: 'The weather is warm and sunny today, and I should like to go out and try to compose some verses. May I go outside the city walls?'

The governor was greatly delighted, and gave his permission. He said: 'You may go out and see the places to the south, but make sure you bring back a poem.'

The boy answered: 'I will do as you say.'

He left the room and called to the valet: 'Boy, saddle the donkey.'

The valet heard the order and saddled the donkey. He rigged it out with

Scarlet-tasselled purple reins and a coral whip;

Jade saddle, broided seat and straps of gold.

The pretty blue and scarlet reins were hung with red bobbles; silver stirrups hung on either side of the tiger-skin under the saddle, and little bells before and behind tinkled like a Buddhist monk telling his rosary.

'The donkey is ready, sir.'

See what the lad does. He carefully combs every hair into place above his handsome fine-boned face, smooths it with beeswax oil, plaits it elegantly with silk ribbons dyed in orpiment, puts on beautifully made trousers of flowered silk from Sōngch'ŏn lined with fine white linen, ties them with ankle-ribbons of indigo flowered-silk over the finest of cotton socks; puts on a magnificent sleeveless silk waistcoat with pendant amber buttons; ties his leggings neatly below his knees; fastens a girdle of Chinese silk and suspends from it a round purse of heavy satin; dons a long coat of the very thinnest Chinese silk gauze with broad sleeves and an elegant long collar-strip; settles a black silk belt round his chest, and draws on a pair of thick-soled shoes with snub toes.

'Hold the donkey for me.'

He put his foot in the stirrup, sprang lightly into the saddle, and turned the donkey about. As he came out of the court a servant fell in behind him, and after they came through the main gate into the street the servant held a large Chinese fan on a metal handle to keep the sun off the young master's face. As he rode along

The mandarins' way to the south city gate,

gaily down the wide road, for all the world like Tu Mu coming tipsy to Yang-chou, the way the people turned to watch him go by was like Chou Yü, who turned his head when he heard a wrong note.

*The streets were bright and fragrant with blossom;
No one who saw it but was filled with delight.*

He ran nimbly up to the Kwanghal-lu and gazed around in all directions. The scenery was magnificent. A late morning mist was lingering round the Chōksōng school, and the place was surrounded with balmy air and late spring foliage.

The red pillars of the pavilion were bathed in sunlight:

The loveliest palace rooms were not more beautiful,

said Wang Po in his poem 'Climbing the High Terrace,'

How comes this elegant pavilion to stand up here so high?

He might have been singing of the Kwanghal-lu. It was as though one could see the Yüeh-yang Pavilion and the Ku-su Terrace, where the rivers from Wu and Ch'u flow down into Lake Tung-t'ing, and the Swallow Pavilion at Peng-tse is clearly visible. Among the riotous pink and white blossoms parrots and peacocks were flying, and in the landscape all around, the twisted pines and conifers and the leaves of the overcup oaks were dancing wantonly in the spring breeze. Beside the tumbling streams the blossoms were laughing, the spreading pine-trees were thick. It was

The season of green shade, of grass and flowers.

The air was intoxicated by cassia trees, red sandalwood, peonies, and green peaches; and the long river Yoch'ŏn was flowing full.

Some way off a pretty girl, as unable as the singing birds to resist the spring feeling, had plucked a spray of azaleas, and put them in her hair. She had picked a white peony and put it in her mouth. She lifted her petticoat and bent to rinse her pretty hands in the stream on the green hillside; she washed her feet, then took a mouthful of water and rinsed her mouth; she picked up a pebble and threw it at the orioles in the willow-trees. Was this not

making the orioles fly away

in the old Chinese spring poem? She scattered willow-leaves to float on the water. Snow-white butterflies danced in fluttering pairs and sipped at the hearts of the flowers, while the golden orioles flew hither and thither among the trees.

The Kwanghal-lu was beautiful, but the Maggie Bridge was better.

There is nothing lovelier in all Ch'olla. But if the Magpie Bridge was there, where were the Herdboy and the Weaving-Maid? In such a place a man could not help but sing. The boy composed two couplets:

I am looking around for the magpie faires

In the heavenly world of Kwanghwa-lu.

I wonder who is the celestial Weaving-Maid?

For see, here I am, the Herdboy.

One of the yamen servants brought him a table with food on it. When he had drunk a cup of wine he told his servant to remove the table. Pleasantly stimulated by the wine, he lit his pipe and put it in his mouth, walking to and fro, delighting in the scenery. K'om-san, Suy'ong and Pory'ôn-am, in Ch'ungch'ông province, were famous, but could they be as beautiful as this place? Glowing red, glistening green, pure white, deepest crimson were the ever-moving colors. The golden orioles calling to each other in the willow-trees enhanced the spring feeling. Golden bees, white butterflies and swallowtails were busy seeking the fragrance of the blossoms, flying hither, flying thither, in the spring landscape. It was as though the three fairy mountains of Ying-chou, Fang-shan and P'eng-lai-shan were there before his eyes. He looked down at the water, and it was like the Milky Way. The whole scene was transformed into a vision of the heavenly world. But if it was the heavenly world, should there not have been Heng-o, the beautiful princess, in her moon-palace?

It was indeed springtime, it was Tano, the fifth day of the fifth moon, the festival of the beginning of summer. W'ol-mae's daughter Ch'un-hyang also knew her poetry; could she fail to know what day it was? With Hyang-dan, her maid, ahead of her, she had come out to play on the swings. Her hair, lovely as orchids, was combed over her ears, neatly plaited, and fixed with a golden hairpin shaped like a phoenix. When she walked through the woods of Changnim, swaying her body gently as she went, her waist in its gauze skirt seemed as frail as the slender willows of Wei-yang. She made her way through the thick shade of the green leaves to a place where the turf was bright and the pairs of orioles flashed gold, flying hither and thither. There a swing hung from a tall luxuriant willow-tree. She took off her long coat of green brocade and her indigo silk skirt, and hung them up. Slipping off her shoes of embroidered Chinese silk she threw them aside. Pulling up her brand-new white petticoat under her chin, she grasped the two thick hempen

ropes of the swing in her pretty little hands and climbed on to it with her white-stockinged feet, setting the swing in motion. Her little body, slender as a willow-bough, swung rhythmically, and the jade and silver ornaments in the back of her hair and the jade and coral ornaments on her breast gleamed against the full-moon pattern of her bodice with its fluttering ribbons.

'Hyang-dan, push me!'

One push and away she went; another push and she went higher, flying through the air like fine dust underfoot, far forward and far back; the leaves above her swept in the same rhythm and her red skirt billowed brightly in the green shade, like a flash of lightning among the white clouds of the sky. 'I looked at what was before me, and suddenly it was behind me,' say the *Analecfs*. She flew forward like a little swallow darting to seize a branch of peach-blossom; and then swung backward like a butterfly that has lost its mate, buffeted against a stone by a gust of wind. Like the fairy of Wu-shan riding on the cloud to arrive at Yang-t'ai, she had a spray of leaves in her lips and a flower stuck enchantingly in her hair.

'Oh, Hyang-dan! I'm dizzy with swinging! Catch the rope for me.'

The swing went back and forth many times before they could stop it, and her jade hairpin fell into the pebbles of the stream with a tinkling sound.

'Oh, my hairpin, my hairpin!'

Ch'un-hyang's voice was like a coral pin shattering on a jade salver, and she was so lovely that she seemed not to belong to this world.

Like the swallows that fly pointlessly back and forth in spring, Yi Mong-nyong felt lonely and depressed. He could not concentrate. He murmured to himself: 'The beautiful Hsi-shih followed Fan Hsiao-pai in a little boat through the Five Lakes, but she won't come here; the lovely maiden of Yü sang her sad song of parting to Hsiang Yü in the moonlight at Kai-hsia, but she won't come here; Wang Chao-chün left the Tan-feng Palace and went beyond the Amur River, where now she lies in the Verdant Tomb; the imperial concubine Pan shut herself deep in the Ch'ang-hsin Palace, where she sang her sad song, and she won't come; Chao Fei-yen left the Chao-yang Palace one morning and became an empress; and she won't come. But the fairy of Lo River or the fairy of Wu-shan, what of them?'

His soul flew off into heaven and his body was left sad and lonely.

He was still unmarried.

'Boy!'

'Here, master.'

'Look over there among the willow-trees. Who is that swinging back and forth so lightly and prettily?'

The servant looked carefully and replied: 'I know who that is. That girl is called Ch'un-hyang. She is the daughter of a kisaeng in the town.'

Mong-nyong replied at once: 'She looks marvellous. She is wonderful.'

The servant went on: 'Although her mother is a kisaeng, Ch'un-hyang is very proud and says: "I am no kisaeng." She spends all her time thinking of flowery poetry and embroidery and writing. She is just like a girl of good family.'

The boy chuckled, called his valet, and said to him: 'I hear she's a kisaeng's daughter. Go and fetch her here at once.'

The valet replied: 'Her snow-white skin and blossom-like face are famous throughout the south. Civil officials, military officials, prefects, magistrates, local officers, every last two-and-a-half-inch high gentleman has tried to meet her. She is as beautiful as Chuang Chiang but as virtuous as T'ai-jen or T'ai-szu. She writes like Li Po or Tu Fu; she's as gentle as T'ai-szu and as chaste as the two consorts of the Emperor Shun; she is without match in the world for beauty, the noblest woman in a thousand years. I am daunted by the thought of inviting her.'

The boy laughed aloud: 'Come on, lad, don't you know that everything has its master? They say that even the white jade of Ching-shan and the yellow gold of Li-sui have their owners. Stop arguing and go at once to fetch her.'

The valet listened to his master and then ran across the bridge to fetch Ch'un-hyang. He was as neat and nimble as the blue bird that carried a message to the Queen Mother of the West as she sat at a banquet by the Lake of Gems.

'Hey! Ch'un-hyang!'

Ch'un-hyang was startled when she heard him call: 'What do you mean by shouting like that? You gave me a shock.'

'Oh, stop chattering; this is important!'

'What is it?'

'The young master, the governor's son, has come out to the Kwanghal-lu and he has seen you swinging. He told me to fetch you.' Ch'un-hyang was indignant: 'You must be mad. How can he have known that it was me, to call me? You must have been chattering about

me like a sparrow cracking hemp-seeds.'

'Not at all. There's no need for me to talk about you. It's your fault, not mine. Just listen. When a girl wants to play on a swing, the proper thing for her to do is to rig up a swing in her own back yard and play where nobody can see her. Here we are, close to the Kwanghal-lu, in a favorite beauty-spot. The grass is fresh and green and the willow-trees by the stream make an emerald curtain, like a screen around the place. Some of the fronds are yellow and some are waving in the breeze as though they were dancing. You have hung your swing in a popular place, and when you swing up there on your little white melon-seed feet, with your red skirt billowing against the clouds and the edge of your petticoat fluttering in the southeast wind, your white skin shows like the flesh of a melon against the sky. The young master saw you and sent for you; there was no need for me to tell him anything about you. Stop arguing and come with me.'

Ch'un-hyang answered: 'I see what you mean, but today is Tano. Am I the only person outside? Plenty of other girls have been here swinging. And that's not all; granting what you say is true, I am not a girl to be ordered about. Decent girls are not to be sent for in this way, and even if they are, they have no reason to go. You have no right to talk to me like this.'

The valet gave up and went back to the pavilion. When the boy heard his report, he said: 'What a wonderful girl! She is quite right, but go back again and try another approach.'

When the valet went back to take his message to Ch'un-hyang, he discovered that she had gone home in the meantime. So he went to her house and found the girl and her mother sitting down to lunch together. As he went in, Ch'un-hyang said: 'Why have you come back?'

'I beg your pardon. The young master sent me back again. He said that the reason why he wants you to come and see him is not that he thinks you are a kisaeng, but that he has heard that you write very good poetry. He knows it is unusual to ask a girl from a good family to come to him, but he begs you to trust his good intentions, and come to see him for a short time.'

Ch'un-hyang asked herself whether this might not be a pre-ordained meeting, and suddenly found that she would like to go, but she wondered what her mother would think about it, so she sat silent for a while. Her mother broke the silence, sitting up straight and speaking distractedly: 'Dreams aren't all pointless. Last night I dreamt that a fantastic green dragon was swimming in a lake surrounded by green-peach trees. I knew it meant something good, and there was nothing of

chance about it. I have heard that the young master's name is Mong-nyong. Now I understand; it all fits—Mong means Dream, and Nyong means Dragon. In any case, when such a gentleman sends for you, how can you refuse? Go and see him.

Ch'un-hyang, pretending to be reluctant, rose and went out to the Kwanghal-lu. She walked like a swallow on a roof-beam in the Taemyōng-jōn, like a hen picking up grain in a sunny yard, like a golden turtle walking on the white sands; lovely as a flower in the moonlight, her slow swimming gait was like Hsi-shih walking to T'u-ch'eng. As she came over to the pavilion the boy stood half leaning on the balustrade, eagerly looking out for her. When she drew close and he could see her clearly, he was delighted. She was fresh and pretty. There was no one to compare with her for loveliness. Her complexion was clear, like a crane white as snow, playing in the moonlight on a clear stream. Her rosy lips were parted to show her white teeth, like stars, like jade. She was beautifully dressed, with a purple gauze skirt enveloping her like twilight mist, a kingfisher-green underskirt glimmering underneath, its pattern rippling like the waves of the Milky Way. Gracefully and sedately she went up into the pavilion and stood there waiting shyly till he said to one of the servants: 'Tell her to sit down.'

Now he could take in the whole of her beauty. He noticed her modest expression and the dignified way in which she sat, like a white pebble in a green stream, a pebble newly washed by the rain; like a roosting swallow surprised by the sight of a man. Although she was not richly dressed, she had outstanding natural beauty. Now that he sat facing her, her face was like the bright moon seen between the clouds, her half-opened pink lips like a lotus flower amid the waters.

'I have never seen a fairy, but surely a fairy from Ying-chou has been exiled to Namwōn, or else the fairies of the moon have lost one of their companions. Your face and your grace do not belong to this world.'

At the same time Ch'un-hyang lifted her eyelids for a moment and looked at the boy. He was a handsome lad, remarkably good-looking. His high forehead showed promise of early success; the fine bones of his face showed that he would become a distinguished statesman. She was filled with admiration, but she lowered her eyebrows and remained kneeling before him. The boy said: 'The sages have said that one should not marry someone with the same surname. Tell me what your surname is and how old you are.'

'My name is Sōng, and I am fifteen years old.'
See what the boy does:

'That's good news. You were born in the same year as me; we are both fifteen, and now I know your surname I am sure this is heaven's destiny for us. Marriage is called *yi-sōng-i-hap*, the union of two surnames, a pun on Yi and Sōng. This is a good omen that we shall be happy for the rest of our lives. Are your parents still alive?

'I live with my widowed mother.'

'How many brothers have you?'

'My mother is sixty years old; she has no sons, and I am her only daughter.'

'So you are a very precious child. We two have met by a special decree of heaven. We shall be happy for ever.'

See what Ch'un-hyang does: she knits her eyebrows, half-opens her lips, and gently murmurs: 'A loyal subject cannot serve two kings, and a faithful wife cannot honor two husbands. I have read this in an old book. You are from a noble family, but I am a woman of the people. After we have plighted our troth, if you put me away because of my low birth, I shall nevertheless be bound to remain faithful to you, and have to spend the rest of my life grieving in a lonely room, and there will be no one to help me. Do not make me do this.'

The boy said: 'You have every reason to speak like that, but I am making you a promise strong as adamant. Where is your house?'

Ch'un-hyang answered: 'Ask your valet.'

The boy laughed: 'I see it's no good asking you. Boy!'

'Yes, master?'

'Tell me where Ch'un-hyang's house is.'

The valet pointed with his hand: 'Over there is a garden full of trees with a clear lotus pond in it, where fish are leaping. The flowers look like fairyland and the birds fly happily. Above the rocks a twisted pine looks like an old dragon hunched up where clear winds blow. Outside the gate a willow-tree stands with waving fronds. There are blueberries, junipers and fir-trees. In the middle there stands a pair of ginkgo trees. In front of the door of the house are paulownia trees, jujube trees, and an ash tree from the deep mountains; grape vines, actinidia and clematis twine together and pour over the outside of the wall. There between the pine pavilion and the bamboo grove you can just see Ch'un-hyang's house.'

The boy said: 'It is neat and tidy, and a place where pines and bamboos grow is for sure a place where the women are faithful.'

Ch'un-hyang got up and said shyly: 'People can easily get the wrong impression. I must not stay any longer.'

When the boy heard this, he said: 'You are right. We must be

careful. But tonight, when the yamen servants have all gone home, I shall come to your house. Please do not be unkind to me."

Ch'un-hyang answered: "I cannot promise."

"If you cannot, who will? Goodbye. We'll meet again tonight."

She went down from the pavilion.

When she got home, her mother came out to meet her: "Oh, you've come back, my dear. What did he say to you?"

"What do you think he said? I sat there for a little while, and when I got up to go he said that he will come to our house this evening."

"How did you answer that?"

"I said I couldn't make any promise."

"That was good."

After Ch'un-hyang had left him so abruptly, Mong-nyong found it hard to collect his thoughts. He went back to his room, but he could not interest himself in anything. All his thoughts were about Ch'un-hyang. Her pretty voice sounded in his ears, her pretty face appeared before his eyes. He was waiting for the sun to go down.

He called his valet: "What time does the sun say?"

"It's just coming up!"

The boy was very angry: "You insolent fellow! How can the afternoon sun start to rise? Go and look again."

This time the valet answered:

"The sun dips into the water at twilight,

The moon rises over the eastern ridge."

Mong-nyong's supper was tasteless.

Longing, longing,

He tossed and fidgeted.

He was longing for the yamen to close. He set out his books on the table and looked them over one by one: *The Doctrine of the Mean*, *The Great Learning*, the *Analects*, *Mencius*, the *Book of Songs*, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Treasury of Ancient Writings*, the *Comprehensive Mirror of Government*, the *Compendium of History*, the *Poems of Li Po* and *Tu Fu*, and the *Thousand Character Classic*.

"Here is the first poem of the *Book of Songs*:

"Kuan-kuan," called the water-birds

On the islets in the stream;

Chaste and modest maiden,

Fits partner for a lord.

Oh, stop! I can't read such stuff."

He picked up the *Great Learning*: "The principles of higher education consist in refining man's clear character, in giving new life to the people" . . . in Ch'un-hyang. . . . I can't read this either."

He picked up the *Book of Changes*: "The creative principle, sublime and successful, persistence" . . . and Ch'un-hyang's nose, the tip of her nose, it's pretty, that's all. I can't stand this stuff. . . . Here is Wang Po's poem *T'eng-wang's Pavilion*:

Nan-ch'ang is an old town,

Hung-tu is a new city. . . .

Read that a little differently, and the women say it means a girl from the south makes a good bride. That's the sort of thing I want to read."

Then he picked up *Mencius*: "Mencius went to see King Hui of Liang, and the king said: 'Sir, since you have not counted it far to come here, a distance of a thousand li' . . . he must have gone to see Ch'un-hyang."

He picked up the *Compendium of History*: "At the beginning of time, the heavenly emperor by his gentle power set up kings, regulated times and seasons and effortlessly guided the people. Each of his eleven brothers lived for eighteen thousand generations."

The valet said: "Just a minute, sir. I have heard that the heavenly emperor ruled by virtue of the element of wood. "Gentle power" makes it sound as though he ruled with herbs. I've never heard that before."

"You idiot! you know nothing. The heavenly emperor lived for eighteen thousand years. His teeth were so strong that he could eat bread made with wood, but do you think his statesmen could do the same? Confucius himself, thinking of future generations, appeared in a dream in the Myōngnyun-dang, and said: "Since the old men's teeth are weak, they must not eat wood bread any more, but bread made with herbs." This was published through all the schools of the land, and this text was changed to "gentle power"."

The valet thought for a moment, and then said: "Listen! That is the sort of thing that the Almighty himself would be surprised to hear."

Then Mong-nyong picked up the *Ch'i-h-pi fu*: "On the sixteenth day of the seventh moon in autumn of the year *jer-hsi*, Su Tung-p'o and his friend were sailing on the Ch'i-h-pi River, a clear breeze was blowing gently and the water was smooth." Oh, that's enough! I've no heart for that sort of thing."

He started to read the *Thousand Character Classic*: "The sky is *ch'ōn*, the earth is *chi*." The valet heard him: "Here, sir! What's a man

of your age doing, reading a primer?"

"The character *ch'ün* is the basis of all the classics. Chou Hsing-szu, an official of Liang, wrote this book in the course of one night, and the effort turned his hair white. That's why it's called 'The white-headed classic'. If I explain it all word by word it will be enough to give you constipation."

"But I know the meaning of the *Thousand Character Classic*."

"What! You think you know what it means?"

"Do you think I would just say so if I didn't?"

"Well, if you know it, read it to me."

"All right, listen: "High and wide the heavens, *ch'ün*; deep, so deep, the earth, *chi*; round and round, tightly wound, *hyün*; burnt in the fire, scorched, *hwang*."

"Here, stop it! That proves you know nothing. You silly fellow, you've been listening to some minstrel in the marketplace. Listen while I read it to you: The heavens open at midnight to reproduce themselves, the heavens wide as creation, *ch'ün*. The earth appears at dawn, the earth made of the five elements and the eight trigrams, *chi*. The thirty-three heavens are empty and void, and the heart of man regards them as black, *hyün*. The twenty-eight constellations belong to metal, wood, water, fire and earth, whose proper color is yellow, *hwang*. The universe is lit by the sun and moon in double splendor, and is the Jade Emperor's high dwelling, *u*. The rise, prosperity and decline of nations throughout history from the beginning until now is the story of the world, *chiu*. Yü controlled the great floods and Kija wrote the nine laws of the *Hung fan*, the great laws, *hong*. The three sovereigns and the five emperors, they passed away, and rebellious subjects and thieves increased, that was trouble, *hwang*. Then, rising in the east to illuminate the world, *bright and red on the edge of the sky*, *the shining sun* of the dawning day, *il*. The moon that shines so peacefully on the crowded world, where millions of people are tamping their house-sites, *wöl*. The sad little moon that starts to wane on the fifteenth night, that's *yöng*. When you think of all the world's troubles, they are like the moonlight, like the bright full moon that begins to decrease, *ch'auk*. The principle of the twenty-eight constellations, the diagrams of the *Book of Changes*: sun, moon, planets and stars, *chin*. *On this fine night I lodge in her house, with mandarin ducks on the quilt*, that's sleeping, *suk*. Passing the time making music with a beautiful woman, that's *yöl*. In the soft moonlight of the silent hours, expressing all that's in my heart, that's *chang*. Today a cold wind is blowing: let's retire to the bedroom; that's cold, *han*. The pillow's too high, so use my

arm; come on then, *nae*. Holding you tightly and entwining our legs, warm in spite of snow and gales; that's *sö*. When the bedroom grows too hot, we move about to fan the air; that's *wang*. Neither too cold nor too hot, when is that? Autumn, when the paulownia leaves fall, *ch'u*. White hairs will come soon enough, so gather the fruits of youth, *su*. Trees fall down in the cold wind which freezes the landscape with white snow in winter, *tong*. Sleeping or waking, I'll never forget our love hidden in the inner room, *chang*. The glistening sheen on the lotus in last night's drizzling rain, *yün*. This beauty is such that when life is over it will still remain, *yö*. The solemn oath of the marriage contract will be fulfilled in the storms of the world, *song*. While we are playing thus together we shall not know the passage of time, *se*. The code of laws says that a wife taken in days of poverty cannot be put away, that she must not be ill-treated, *yul*. *Fit partner for a lord* is she not? When Ch'un-hyang's lips are pressed to mine, and we are kissing eagerly, will that not be *yö*—written like two mouths together—? Oh, how I long to see her!"

His father, the governor, who had felt pangs of indigestion while sitting at supper, had risen from table, and was on his way to lie down. When the cry "Oh! how I long to see her!" startled him.

"Come here!"

"Here, master."

"Is someone having acupuncture in the study? Or has he got pins-and-needles in his leg? Go and find out."

The servant went to see.

"Young master, why did you shout like that? The governor was startled by the noise, and sent me to find out what it was. What shall I tell him?"

The boy was very worried. "You tell him this: I was reading the *Analec's*, and when I came to the passage *How utterly badly things have gone for me! It is long since I dreamed that I saw the Duke of Chou*, I was so moved, I wondered what it would be like if I saw the Duke of Chou, and I cried aloud. Just tell him that."

The servant went in and told this story. The governor was delighted that his son was so studious: "Good. Go to the study and tell Mok the secretary to come here quietly."

When the secretary came into the room you could see from the way he hurried, anxious to find out what was the matter, what a petty-minded man he was.

"Is your Excellency feeling lonely?"

"Ah, sit down a minute. I have something to say. We've been

friends for a long time. We learned our letters together. Do you remember how we hated reading? But this son of mine shows an astonishing gift for poetry.'

The secretary, much mystified, replied: 'What is more hateful than learning to read Chinese characters as a child?'

'To get out of reading youngsters fall asleep and think of all sorts of tricks. But once this boy starts reading, he doesn't know the difference between day and night.'

'Yes, I've heard that said.'

'He's hardly been taught at all, but his calligraphy is first-class.'

'That's a fact.'

'When he writes a dot, it's like a stone dropped from a high peak; when he draws a straight line, it's like a thousand-*li* cloud; he writes the top of a character as neatly as can be. His style is like waves and lightning. When he makes a slanting stroke, it is like an old pine bending from a cliff. He writes the character for 'spear' like a spreading wisteria vine, and he draws a hook like a taut bow. Even if some of the strokes lack strength, they all have perfect form.'

'I have noticed that his strokes have perfect form.'

'Yes, but listen! when he was eight years old, there was an old blossoming plum tree in the garden of my house in Seoul, and I told him to write a poem about it. He wrote it very quickly, but it was so full of feeling and so good in technique that seeing it once was enough to remember it. He's bound to bring glory to his family. He looks round once and straightway produces a classic poem.'

'He will become a great minister of state.'

The governor was growing excited: 'A minister of state! How dare I boast of it? He'll easily pass the state examination before I die, and then he'll get a government appointment, for certain.'

'You've no need to talk like that. If he doesn't become a Ch'ongsung, minister of state, he'll become a Changsung, devil-post.'

The governor exclaimed: 'Where did you learn to answer like that?'

'I answered like that, but I don't know where I learned it.' So he said, but it was not true.

Ch'ong-nyong was still waiting for the yamen to close for the night.

'Boy!'

'Here I am.'

'See if the yamen has closed yet for the night.'

'No, not yet.'

A little later they heard the call closing the yamen: 'Time to withdraw!'

'Good. Now we can get ready. Boy, light the lantern.'

One servant followed behind as they went out stealthily to go to Ch'un-hyang's house.

'Boy, there's a light in my father's room. Hold the lantern on the other side and shield it.'

They went out through the main gate, through the narrow lanes in the white moonlight, through the flowers. Now and then they broke off a spray of the green willows. The young men of the town had gone to spend the night at the kisaeng houses, so there was nothing to delay them. In the still quietness of the night they made their way through a moonlit world. How could the fisherman not know the way to the Peach-blossom Valley? When they reached Ch'un-hyang's gate the neighborhood was still, the night air was silent and the moon shone bright at midnight. The leaping fish were popping in and out of the water, plump golden carp opening their mouths as though they were pleased, and the excited cranes were calling in the moonlight.

Ch'un-hyang had been sitting with her seven-stringed lute aslant her knees, playing the Southern Breeze Song of the Emperor Shun, but now she had fallen asleep on her bed. The valet was afraid that the dog would bark as he went in, so he crept quietly up to Ch'un-hyang's window and whispered outside it: 'Hey! Ch'un-hyang! Are you asleep?'

Ch'un-hyang sat up, startled: 'Why have you come?'

'The young master is here.'

When Ch'un-hyang heard this, her heart began to thump. Unable to disguise her excitement, she opened the door and ran out. She went over to her mother's room and woke her.

× 'Mother, mother! Why are you sleeping so soundly?'

Her mother woke up: 'What are you calling me for?'

'Who's calling you for anything?'

'Then why are you calling?'

Ch'un-hyang burst out: 'Young master Yi and his valet are here.'

Her mother got up and opened the door and called to the valet: 'Who is there?'

The valet answered: 'The young master, the governor's son, has come.'

When Ch'un-hyang's mother heard this, she called out: 'Hyang-dan!'

'Yes?'

'Go and put some cushions out in the guest-room, and light the candles.' Ch'un-hyang's mother came out as she gave the order. Anybody could see she was Ch'un-hyang's mother: it is an old saying that people take after their mother's side, and Ch'un-hyang was obviously her daughter. See how she moves: her hair is more white than black, but she is still graceful. Her movements are neat, her skin still smooth and clear. She is a fortunate woman. She moves with dignity, dragging her feet a little, as she quietly approaches the valet.

Meanwhile Mong-nyong stood looking around listlessly, till the valet came out and said: 'This is Ch'un-hyang's mother coming now.'

She came and stood in front of him politely, with the palms of her hands together: 'Has all been well with you, young sir?'

The boy smiled: 'So you're her mother. How are you?'

'Thank you, all goes well. We did not know you were coming, so we are not ready to welcome you.'

'Yes. Have you ever heard of such a thing?'

She led them through the main gate, past the second court to the inner garden, where there was an old thatched guest-house with candles alight inside. The dangling sprays of the willows were silhouetted against the candlelight like the strands of a beaded curtain; to the right a phoenix tree was dripping with clear dew, like a crane startled in a dream; to the left an umbrella pine was rustled by the clear breeze, like an old and dreaming dragon; on the big plantain by the window, the first tender leaves of the season were springing like phoenix's tail-feathers. The new lotus-flowers, like jewels from the heart of the water, were barely above the surface of the pond, catching the drops of dew; the plump golden carp were trying to change from fish to dragon, leaping about in and out of the water in their play, slapping the young lotus-leaves with their flanks. The peaks of the ornamental rocks stood still and silent. The cranes standing by the steps, surprised by the people, spread their wings, stretched their legs, and called; the little shaggy dog barked under the cinnamon tree. A pair of ducks were floating on the pond like a happy omen, as though waiting for the guest to arrive.

When they arrived under the eaves, Ch'un-hyang, following her mother's instructions, half opened the gauze screen and came out, beautiful as the shining moon emerging from the clouds. Her beauty was beyond description; her shy look as she came down the steps and stood for a moment in front of them was enough to melt any man's heart. Mong-nyong smiled and asked her: 'Were you tired when you

got home today?'

Ch'un-hyang was too shy to answer, and she stood silent. Her mother led the way up the steps into the room and arranged cushions for the boy to sit down. She had tea brought in for him and lit a pipe. The boy sat and puffed. He had come because he wanted Ch'un-hyang, not because he wanted her property, but this was the first time he had come to such a house. Before he came in, he thought he knew what he was going to say, but now he was inside he could think of no words at all. He was suddenly short of breath, and coughed nervously; he felt chilly and, think as hard as he would, had no idea what to say next. As he looked round the room, he saw a number of paintings and curios on the walls: wardrobes carved with dragons and phoenixes, cosmetic boxes scattered around, many of them ornamented with paintings. Ch'un-hyang had no husband, and she was a studious girl, so why should she have so many things of this kind? It was because her mother was a well-known kisaeng, and was preparing to give all these things to her daughter. There was some calligraphy by famous Korean calligraphers, and several notable paintings, including pictures of the Eight Fairies, which had such inscriptions as:

'The Emperor gives audience to the dancing-girls.'

'Li Po reads the Huang-ting-ching at the Yellow Crane Pavilion.'

'Li Ho is invited to write the roof-beam inscription for the white Jade Tower in Heaven.'

'The meeting of the Weaving-Maid and the Herdboy on the Maggie Bridge on the seventh night of the seventh moon.'

'Heng-o compounding simples in the moonlight at Kwanghal-lu.' He was dazzled at the bright array. Looking to one side, he saw a vividly-drawn picture of Yen Tzu-ling of Fu-ch'un-shan, having declined office at court, living with the seagulls for friends, and monkeys and cranes for neighbors, dressed in sheepskin and casting his fishing-line in the Ch'i-li stream of the T'ung River.

The room was like some place in fairyland. *Fu partner for a lord.* would its owner be. Ch'un-hyang had written a poem which showed how she intended to be faithful to her husband and had naively put it up over the writing-desk:

Rustling bamboos in the gentle winds of spring;

Reading books while incense burns at night.

'Wonderful! That couplet shows the faithfulness of a girl like the paragon Mu-lan,' said the boy.

Hearing such praise, the girl's mother said: 'I am overwhelmed that you should do us the honor of visiting this humble place.'

This remark was enough to loosen Mong-nyong's tongue: 'You have no reason to speak like that. I saw Ch'un-hyang by chance at the Kwanghal-in and I was enchanted by her. Like the butterfly that is enthralled by the flower, I have come tonight to meet you, her mother. I want to be betrothed to her. Will you permit it?'

The mother replied: 'You do us too great an honor; but please consider; Governor Song, who lived outside the Purple Mist Gate of Seoul, when he was posted for a time to Namwŏn, mistook a kite for a falcon and called me to serve him. After I had been with him three months, he returned to the capital; but I found I was pregnant and this child of mine was born. When I told him about her, he said: "When she is weaned, bring her to me." Unhappily, he died soon after, and I could not send her to him. She was difficult to rear, because she was delicate. By the time she was seven she had read the *Lesser Learning* and she grew stronger, a willing and gentle child, quick to learn everything, and such a little lady that no one would think her the child of a kisaeng. I had so little money that I could not send her to be prepared for marriage in a noble house, and I have been worried that she will be slow in finding a spouse because it will be difficult to decide on the right rank of husband for her. So don't speak so readily of a betrothal-contract. Just enjoy yourself for a little while as our guest.'

However, she did not mean what she was saying. When the boy said he wanted to marry Ch'un-hyang, though she was not sure what that would mean for the future, she hoped they could now make a break with the past. Mong-nyong, perplexed, said: 'Every good plan meets hindrances. Neither Ch'un-hyang nor I are married. Now we have got this far there is nothing to prevent us marrying. I am a gentleman's son, and I would not deceive you.'

When Ch'un-hyang's mother heard this, she said: 'It says in an old book, *No one knows a subject better than his king; no one knows a son better than his father*. Who should know a daughter better than her mother? I know the sort of girl my daughter is. From the time she was a child she has been strong-willed, and she has worried lest she should do anything in the least improper. She is determined to be faithful to her husband, and her iron will is as unchanging as the pine, bamboo and fir, which stay green through the four seasons. Even though the world were turned upside down and the mulberry orchards became oceans, she would never change her mind. If gold and silver, jade and silks from Wu and Shu were piled up like mountains, they would not move her. Her heart is as clear as the finest jade, and as pure as the clear breeze. Her sole desire is to live according to the ancient ideals.

Your lordship has been tempted by desire to form a tie with her, and if without the knowledge of your parents you fall deeply in love, but later decide to give her up because of gossip, my poor daughter will be cast off like a broken trinket of finely mottled tortoiseshell or pretty pearl. She will be like a mandarin duck that has lost the drake she played with so happily in summer days. If your intentions are really sincere, think very carefully before you act.'

Mong-nyong felt more frustrated than ever: 'Please stop worrying about that at once. My mind is completely made up and my heart is firm. Even though we have different social obligations, when she and I are betrothed, whether or not we go through the full formalities—the presentation of the goose and the red and blue silks—my love for her is as deep as the sea.'

He was more in earnest saying this than he would have been if he had gone through the ceremonies of the red and blue cords and the rest of the six rites of a wedding: 'I will treat her as my first wife, so do not worry that I shall put her into a subordinate position. Don't worry about the formalities of the wedding; would a gentleman such as I treat her shabbily? Please give your consent.'

Ch'un-hyang's mother listened to him and sat silent. She was thinking about the dream she had had. She decided that this was a pre-ordained match and suddenly gave her consent: 'When a hen phoenix appears, a cock phoenix will follow; where there is a general, there will also be a fine horse—if there is a Spring Fragrance in Namwŏn, it means that the plum trees are in bloom. Spring Fragrance is Ch'un-hyang, and your family name means Plum.'

'Hyang-dan! Is the wine-tray ready?'

'Yes,' came the reply.

These are the tidbits piled high on the table: tripe, chitterlings, steamed ribs of beef, boiled pork, bubbling fish soup, stewed quails; abalone from Tongnae and Ulsan, cut with a tortoiseshell-handled knife, and set out like the eyelashes of Meng Shang-chün; pieces of bullock's heart grilled on skewers, fried tripe, legs of spring pheasant; arranged on dishes from Chŏkpyŏk and bowls from the Punwŏn potteries are chilled noodles, raw chestnuts, roasted chestnuts, pine-nut cones, walnuts, jujubes, pomegranates, pomeles, persimmons, cherries, and early pears as big as soup-bowls. The wine-bottles are wonderful, flawless white jade and coral from the blue seas, paulownia bottles like golden autumn leaves falling into a well, bottles with long egret necks, bottles shaped like turtles, Chinese painted bottles, gilded bottles, bottles of bamboo from the Hsiao-hsiang rivers by Lake Tung-t'ing;

and wine-kettles of the finest silver, of red brass, of chased gold. The wines are the grape wine of Li Po, the purple mist wine of An Chisheng, the pine-needle wine of the forest hermits, strong summer wine with spirits in it, Pangmun flavored-wine, thousand-day wine, hundred-day wine, golden dew, the fieriest spirits, medicinal wine, fragrant lotus-leaf wine. In an oval kettle set on white ashes in a green brass stove, filled with water that is neither too hot nor too cold, gold cups, jade cups, and mother-of-pearl cups shaped like tiny parrots float like the lotus-leaf boat of the immortal of the T'ai-i star among the heavenly lotus flowers, like the plantain-leaf fan of the chief councillor of state. They seem to be singing a drinking song: 'Take a cup, take a cup, take a cup more.'

Mong-nyong said: 'When I see such food as this, I wonder how it can be produced outside a nobleman's house.'

Ch'un-hyang's mother replied: 'My daughter has been carefully brought up as a

Chaste and modest maiden

Fit partner for a lord.

If she is going to live the rest of her days happily married,

With lutes and guitars as her friends,

then when her husband's guests, noblemen and heroes, great warriors and distinguished scholars, call on him informally by day and night, if she as mistress of the house has not learned how to supervise the servants in preparing a table of wine and food, how will she be able to wait on her husband properly? If the wife is badly taught, the master of the house loses face. All my life I have striven my hardest to give her a good example, and when we could afford it have bought good things so that she could learn by practice, training her eyes and her hands, never wasting the least moment. Forgive its shortcomings; taste it and see how you like it.'

She filled a parrot cup and handed it to the boy. He took it and sighed as he held it in his hand: 'If things went as I should wish, we should have all the wedding ceremonies. But that cannot be, and I am getting married like a dog in a hole. What a pity! Here, Ch'un-hyang! We must drink this wine as the wine of the wedding rites.'

He filled a cup and raised it: 'Listen to what I say: the first cup is for greeting, the second is for mutual joy. This wine is the root and source of happiness. The Emperor Shun, when he met O-huang and Nü-ying, fulfilled history's greatest destiny; but our destiny too is made by the Old Man of the Moonlight, who arranges all marriages; our destiny is a contract through three transmigrations of our souls; our

destiny will not change for ten million years; our destiny will last till our descendants become the first three state-councillors with increasing numbers of grandsons, great-grandsons and great-great-grandsons, who will climb on our knees and beat their tiny fists in time to nursery rhymes; and we shall live for a hundred years as no one lived so happily nor will do ever afterward; by the time we die it will have been the most wonderful of all destinies.'

He drained the cup and said: 'Hyang-dan, fill the cup and give it to your mistress. Mother, please drink one cup of wine for the sake of our happiness.'

Ch'un-hyang's mother took the wine up with mingled joy and sorrow: 'Today the sorrows and joys of my daughter's life are decided for ever. I don't know why I feel so sad, but I brought her up alone, without her father, and now we have come to this time I cannot help thinking of him. It makes me very sad.'

But the boy said: 'Don't think about things gone by. Please drink some wine.'

The girl's mother drank several cups of wine. Then she called the boy's servant and told him to take the table away: 'You may eat something; and tell the valet to have some too.'

The servant and the valet took the table away and after they had eaten, the outer gate and the inner gate were closed. Ch'un-hyang's mother called Hyang-dan and told her to prepare the bedroom. The maid set out the quilt embroidered with mandarin ducks, a pillow with pine-cone ruching, a round brass chamber-pot which shone like the morning sun, and a large bowl of clean water.

'Good night, sir. Sleep well.'

'Come along, Hyang-dan. Come and sleep in my room,' said the mother, and the two of them went over to the main house.

Ch'un-hyang and Mong-nyong were left sitting facing each other. What will happen now? Like a crane dancing with wings outstretched on the peak of Sangak-san in the setting sun, the boy stretched out his hands and clasped Ch'un-hyang's pretty soft fingers which were joined in her lap. He gently lifted her skirt and eagerly embraced her waist: 'Take your skirt off.'

Not only was it the first time that such a thing had happened to Ch'un-hyang, but she was shy and nervous. She hung her head and her body swayed like a pink lotus in a breeze over the green water. The boy

removed her skirt and then her underclothes, and she was terrified beyond reason. She wriggled like the blue dragon of the eastern seas:

'Stop it! Let go! Stop it!'

'Come on, now, that's no way to talk!' As they were struggling, she caught one of the tapes of her dress underfoot, and they fell over, stretched out embracing one another. With her clothes off, Ch'un-hyang was so white, she was fairer than the jade of Ching-shan. When she was undressed, the boy let go of her so that he could look at her properly.

'Ah! I've let go of her!'

Ch'un-hyang slipped between the sheets. The boy quickly followed her, removed her bodice and threw it on a pile with his own clothes in the corner. They lay clasping each other. How could they sleep like that? As their bones melted in ecstasy, the heavy quilt danced, the brass chamber-pot kept time with ringing sounds, the iron loop of the doorhandle rattled, the flame of the candle flickered delightedly. It was the finest sort of sleep. Could any joy be greater than this?

After the second night, because they were young, they renewed their joys and lost their shyness. They began to tease each other, to joke with each other, and make impromptu love-songs. Playing at love, they played like this:

Oh, love, my love, my love!

Love high as Wu-shan in the moonlight

by the seven-hundred-*li* lake of Tung-t'ing;

Love boundless as the sky over the sea, and deep as the ocean;

Love like the moon shining on a thousand peaks of jade mountains in autumn;

Love that asks to play the flute for dancing;

Love like peach and plum blossom seen through the screen in the evening sunlight;

Love that abounds in the winsome smiles of a pretty girl's face;

Love that brings us together in three successive lives,

bound by the Old Man of the Moonlight;

Love without reproach between husband and wife;

Love lovely as a full-blown peony in the garden in the rain;

Love like being caught in a drag-net in the sea off Yöng'yöng;

Love of many strands,

like the weaving of the Damsel of the Milky Way;

Love that is concealed like the seams in the quilt of a dancing-girl;

Love dense as the fronds of the weeping willows by the brook;

Love piled up like the grains in all the granaries of the land;

Love packed tight like clothes in wardrobes

inlaid with silver, inlaid with jade;

Love like golden bees and white butterflies sucking the flowers and dancing in the colors of spring on Yöngsan;

Love like a pair of mandarin ducks

bobbing on the clear water of a stream;

Love when the Herdboy meets the Weaving Maid each seventh night of the seventh moon;

Love of Liu-kuan's disciple Hsing-chen playing with the Eight Fairies;

Love of Hsiang Yü following the beauty of Yü at Li-pa-shan,

Love of the Emperor Ming of T'ang for Yang Kuei-fei,

Love like the sea-roses blooming by the long white sands.

Everything about you is lovely.

Öhwa-dung-dung, oh, my love,

Öhwa, my lovely one, my love!

Ch'un-hyang! Walk over there and let me watch you. Now come back! Let me see how you come. Let me see you smile. Walk with little steps. Let me see you move.

The love of you and me together! Where else have the stars made such a destiny? If we love like this in life, how can our wedding end in death?

When you die, I'll tell you what you'll be:

When you die, you'll be a Chinese character,

The character for earth, for female, for wife: the element of woman.

When I die, I shall be a Chinese character:

The character for heaven, character for male,

character for husband, character for man: the element of son—

Put that by the element of woman

And we have the character for 'good'!

Oh, love, my love, my love!

When you die, I'll tell you what you'll be:

When you die you'll be water:

Water of the Milky Way, water of the waterfalls,

water of the boundless seas,

Water of the clear streams, water of the jade valley brooks,

ending in winding rivers,

Grateful water from the skies,

that soaks the land after seven years' drought.

When I die, I'll be a bird:

I'll not become a mournful cuckoo,
Nor even a bluebird at the Lake of Gems,
Nor a blue crane, nor a white gull.

I'll not even become a great *p'eng*—
I shall become a mandarin duck, that never leaves its mate,
A mandarin duck swimming on the green waters.

Ōhwa-dung-dung, swimming together!
You will know it's me, *ŏhwa* my lovely one, my love!

'I don't want to be any such thing.'

All right then, I'll tell you what you'll be when you die:

When you die, you won't be the great bell of Kyōngju,
You won't be the great bell of Chōnju,
You won't be the great bell of Songdo,
You'll be the bell in the Bell-street of Seoul.

When I die, I shall be the clapper of the bell;
Counting the twenty-eight constellations and the thirty-three
heavens,

When the beacon on Saddle Mountain flares three times,
When the beacon on South Mountain flares twice,

The first sound of the bell is struck.

Every time it rings, other people will listen

And think it is only the bell;

But inside ourselves we'll know

That it's Mong-nyong making love to Ch'un-hyang.

Let's see if I'm right.

Oh love, my lovely one, my love!

'I don't like that either.'

Then, when you die, I'll tell you what you'll be:

When you die, you'll become a mortar;
When I die, I'll be a pestle;

The pestle and mortar made by Chiang T'ai-kung
At the hour of the white monkey

Of the day of the white monkey

Of the month of the white monkey

Of the year of the white monkey;

And when I am pounding, you'll know that it's me—

Oh love, my lovely one, my love!

Ch'un-hyang said: 'I don't like it; I don't want to be that either.'

'Why, what's the matter?'

'Why do you always say that I must be underneath, in this life and the next? I don't like it at all.'

'All right then: when you die, let's put you on top:—you become the upper grindstone, and I'll become the nether grindstone. When two fresh young faces are clasped by young hands, and move together like the spheres of heaven and earth, then you'll know it is me.'

'I don't like it. I won't be that either. What comes from on top is only exasperating, because some wretched fate gives a person an extra orifice. . . . I hate everything!'

All right! When you die, I'll tell you what you'll be:

When you die, you'll be a sea-rose by the long white sands.

When I die, I'll be a butterfly.

I shall nibble your anthers

And you will nibble my beard.

When the spring breezes blow gently

We'll dance a swaying dance together.

Oh love, my love, my love,

My love, my lovely one.

If I look here, I see my love;

If I look there, I see my love;

Everywhere I see my love!

Must I live caught up in love?

Ōhwa-dung-dung, oh, my love,

My pretty one, my love!

When you smile so prettily,

The king of flowers, the peony

Seems half-way open after last night's showers.

Wherever I look, I see my love!

Oh! My lovely one.

'Now what shall I sing? Since you and I are deep in love, let's make a rhyme on love. Let's make a rhyme with puns on love, all the words that end in *chōng*.'

'Let's hear it.'

Listen, my love;

Since you and I are deep in love,

What can we do with so much love, *taijōng*?

Rippling water of long rivers carrying travelers' worries, *kaek-chōng*—

I could not say goodbye to you at the bridge,

The riverside trees have gulped down my feelings, *hanjōng*,

When I see you off to a southern port

I cannot overcome my feelings, *sūnjōng*.

With no one, when we part, to see my feelings, *ajōng*.

The first Han emperor's pavilion, *Hyū-jōng*

Three generations of statesmen, officials to fill the court, *chojōng*

Monastic quietness, *ch'ōngjōng*

The women's courtyard, *ch'inyōng*

Friendship's shared feelings, *i'ōngjōng*

The shattered world set at peace, *p'yōngjōng*

We two will have a thousand years of love, *inyōng*

The moon is bright and the stars are few

Over Hsiao-hsiang rivers and Lake Tung-t'ing, *Tōngjōng*

All created things in due order, *chohwjōng*

Trials and worries, *kōkchōng*

Petitions and accusations, *wōnjōng*

Sharing love, *inyōng*

Grumbles about food, *i'ujōng*

Boorish frivolity, *pangjōng*

Court of claims, *songjōng*

Government offices, *kwanjōng*

Internal affairs, *naejōng*

External affairs, *oejōng*

The Pine-tree Pavilion, *Aesong-jōng*

The Archery Pavilion, *Ch'ōnyang-jōng*

Yang Kwei-fei's fragrant arbor, *Ch'inyang-jōng*

The Emperor Shun's two wives' Pavilion, *Sosang-jōng*

The Cold Pine Pavilion at Kangnūng, *Hansong-jōng*

The Delights of Spring Pavilion,

where a hundred flowers bloom, *Hoch'un-jōng*

The moon rising over Kirin Peak,

over the White Cloud Pavilion, *Paegun-jōng*

The joy of our meeting, *mannanjōng*

If we speak of one feeling, *ichōng*

The truth of the matter, *sichōng*

My mind is as strong as the Book of Changes: wōn, hyōng, i, chōng
Your mind is constant, *ilp'yōnt'akchōng*

But if in all this affection, *taijōng*

We should ever grow cool, *p'ajōng*

How it would hurt to break off from each other, *chōlchōng*

And that in truth, *chinyōng*

Is how I protest my feelings, *wōnjōng*

Ch'un-hyang was delighted. She said: 'That's a good song of love, but now how about reciting a sutra for the peace and prosperity of our family?'

Mong-nyong laughed: 'Do you think that's all I'll do? I'll do better than that. Listen to my punning song about our palace, *kung*.'

'Oh dear, you are so funny! What's your palace song?'

'Just listen; it's full of good things:

Born into this little world from the womb, *t'aegung*

Making the lights of heaven shine blessedly in thunder, lightning

and storms—the stellar mansions, *ch'anghapkung*

The palace where the king of Yin ruled the people wisely

and welcomed clouds of guests round lakes of wine, *Ta-t'ing-kung*

The first Chin emperor's *A-fang-kung*

The palace where the first Han emperor asked how to win the world,

Hsien-yang-kung

The palace beside it, *Ch'ang-le-kung*

The palace of the imperial concubine Pan, *Ch'ang-hsin-kung*

The palace of the Emperor Ming of T'ang, *Shang-ch'un-kung*.

Come up here to the detached palace, *igung*

Go up there to the summer palace, *pyōngung*

The crystal palace of the Dragon King, *suijōng-gung*

The fairy palace in the moon, *Kuang-han-kung*

Since you and I have matching horoscopes, *hapkung*

We'll live our whole lives free from want, *mugung*.

But let's stop talking of these palaces, *kung-gung*

For between your legs there's a water-palace, *sur'yong-gung*

I'll find my way there with my strong cudgel!

Ch'un-hyang suppressed a giggle: 'Don't joke like that!'

'That's not a joke. Ch'un-hyang! Let's play at piggyback.'

'Oh dear, I feel such a fool. How do you play piggyback?'

It sounded as though she had done it before.

'Nothing could be easier. We take all our clothes off, ride each other's backs, and put our arms round each other. That's all there is to it.'

'Oh dear, I'm ashamed. I won't undress.'

'My word, what a girl! That's no way to talk. I'll undress first.' He took off his socks, ankle-ribbons, sash, trousers and jacket, and threw them into a corner. Then he stood up straight and naked. Ch'un-hyang looked at him and smiled, turning her head away: 'You look just like a goblin in the daylight.'

'I like that. There is a mate for everything under the sun. Let's play like a pair of goblins!'

'Then put the light out first.'

'What's the fun with the light out? Come on, get those clothes off, get them off!'

'Oh dear, I hate it.'

The boy took her clothes off, fondling her as he did so. Like an old tiger which has picked up a fat bitch in his mouth but cannot eat it because he has no teeth; like a black dragon from the north sea holding the mystic pearl in his mouth and playing with it among the shining clouds; like the phoenix of Tan-shan carrying a bamboo fruit in its beak and playing among the paulownia trees; like a blue crane of the nine marshes carrying an orchid in its beak and playing among the ancient pines, his hands crept round her narrow waist, trembling as they went. He caressed her ears and cheeks with his lips, nibbled her red tongue, like the doves that bill and coo in pairs in the pure gold decorations on colored wardrobes. He turned her round and gently cupped her breasts in his hands, trembling still. He took off her blouse, her skirt, her underclothes; and she, ashamed, ran and sat in a corner. The boy's heart was beating fast and the beads of sweat stood out upon his face as though he were being roasted.

'Come here. Ch'un-hyang, let me put you on my back.'

Ch'un-hyang was still reluctant.

'What have you got to be ashamed of? We know one another completely now. Come and let me carry you.'

He hoisted her on to his back and fondled her: 'There you are, up now. You're very heavy for a girl. How do you like it when I carry you like this?'

'It's rather nice.'

'Do you like it?'

'Yes, I do.'

'I do too. Now I shall say nice things to you, and you must answer.'

'All right, go on then.'

'Are you gold?'

'You can't say I'm gold. When Ch'u and Han had been fighting for eight years, Ch'en Ping, who made the six decisive plans, used forty thousand pieces of gold to catch Fan Ya-fu. How can there be any gold left?'

'All right. Then are you jade?'

'You can't say I'm jade. The first Ch'in emperor, in ancient days, got jade from Ching-shan and had Li Szu make an imperial seal with the inscription: *I have received the mandate of heaven, I have lived long, I shall flourish for ever*. This is a well-known old story; how can there be any more jade?'

'Well, then, what are you? Are you a sea-rose?'

'A sea-rose won't do either. Have you ever heard of a sea-rose without ten leagues of white sand?'

'Then what are you? Are you clear amber, cloudy amber, mother-of-pearl, or real pearl?'

'They won't do either. Those things have been used for the hat-string beads and hat-pins of statesmen and all the mandarins and magistrates of the Eight Provinces. What was left over has been made into hundreds of rings for the famous kisaeng of the land. So amber and pearl won't do.'

'Then are you tortoiseshell or coral?'

'I'm not those things either. The great tortoiseshell screens and the coral balustrades were recorded as treasures of the palace in the roof-beam inscription of King Kuang-li. So tortoiseshell and coral won't do.'

'Then you must be a half-moon.'

'I'm not a half-moon. Tonight is not the first half of the month. How could I break off a bit of that full moon shining in the sky?'

'Then whatever are you? Are you a red fairy fox, that's come to eat me? Your mother has brought you up beautifully, but were you born specially to choose and eat me? Oh love, my love, my lovely one! What do you want to eat? Raw chestnuts? Roast chestnuts? A big round watermelon cut up with a tortoiseshell-handled knife and soaked in white Kangnung honey to be eaten piece by red piece with a silver spoon?'

'No, I don't want that sort of thing.'

'Then what do you want to eat? Do you want a lip-shriveling wild apricot?'

'No, I don't want that either.'

'Then what will you eat? Shall I kill a pig for you? Shall I kill a puppy for you? Or do you want to eat me up?'

'Come now, have you ever seen me eat a man?'

'Oh, what a lot of nonsense all this is! *Ohwa-dung-dung*, she is my love! Come on, get down now. The whole of creation is subject to change; I have given you a piggyback; now you must carry me.'

'Oh, you are strong and you can carry me around, but I am not strong enough to carry you.'

'Of course you can carry me. Take me on your shoulders, and I will let my feet just touch the floor. Do it like that.'

She took the boy on her back and danced clumsily: 'Oh dear, this is terrible.'

They swayed this way and that: 'What does it feel like to have me on your back? When I was carrying you, I said nice things to you; now you are carrying me, you must say nice things to me.'

'I will say nice things to you. Just listen: I am carrying *Fu Yüeh* on my back; I am carrying *Chiang T'ai-kung*. He has great thoughts in his heart, he will be known throughout the land. He will be a pillar of the state, counted with all the great men of the country: the Six Martyred Loyalists of *Tanjong*, the Six Living Loyalists of *Tanjong*, a master like the sun, a master like the moon. It is like carrying *Ch'oe Ch'i-wön*, it is like carrying *Ko Kyöng-myöng*, like carrying *Kim Ung-ha*, like carrying *Chöng Ch'öl*, like carrying Admiral *Yi Sun-sin*, *Song Si-yöl*, *Yi Hwang*, *Kim Chang-saeng*, and *Yun Kük*; but he is my husband, my husband, the husband I love so much.

'As soon as he has passed his degree in letters, he will become a state secretary. Then he will be an academician. Then he will rise through the ranks of the government till he reaches the top. When he has traveled as governor through all the Eight Provinces, he will return to Court and will be chosen for his great qualities as rector of the Confucian college, as Minister of State, Minister of the Left, Minister of the Right, Prime Minister, Privy Counsellor, till he has filled all the three thousand domestic posts and eight hundred external posts, a true pillar of the state. Oh, my husband, the husband I love!'

Her hands were moist as she stroked him.

'Ch'un-hyang! Let's play horses.'

'That sounds silly. What do you mean?'

The boy made it sound as though he had often played: 'It's the easiest thing in the world. We both have all our clothes off, and you crawl around the room on all fours. I sit on your back with my knees

gripping your waist, and when I slap your bottom and say "Gee-up!" you neigh and bound away. If you prance well, I have a song about riding.

Let's play riding, let's play riding!

Riding like the Yellow Emperor high in his southward-finding chariot

While the drums of victory roll

After he has invented weapons and made a smoke-screen

To vanquish *Ch'ih-yu* on the field of *Cho-lu-yeh*;

Riding like the Emperor *Yü* in his land-traversing chariot

When he ruled the nine-years flood;

Riding as *Ch'ih-sung-tzu* rode the clouds;

Riding as *Lü T'ung-pin* rode the white egret;

Riding as *Li Po* rode the dolphin;

Riding as *Meng Hao-ian* rode his donkey;

Riding as the *T'ai-yi* fairy rode the crane;

Riding as the Chinese Emperor rides his elephant;

Riding as our own king rides his royal car;

Riding as the three prime ministers ride their chariots;

Riding as the six ministers ride their carriages;

Riding as the generals ride their war-cars;

Riding as the prefects and magistrates ride their palanquins;

Riding as the governor of *Nannwön* rides his own special chariot,

Riding like an old fisherman in a slip of a boat
as the sun goes down over the long river....

Riding, I have nothing to ride on

But tonight in the dead of darkness

I will ride on *Ch'un-hyang's* body for a boat,

Hoisting the sheet for a sail,

Using my instrument as an oar,

Dipping into the hidden spring,

As without effort I cross

The waters of life in a gentle breeze!

I will take her for a horse to ride

And will she not trot gently?

I will be the groom,

I will hold the reins so lightly,

I will pull the reins so firmly,

I will make you canter!

You will jump like a circus horse.

They played all sorts of games together. Was anything like it ever seen? The two fifteen-year-olds played together to their hearts' content and forgot the passage of time.

II

The valet came unexpectedly: 'Your father is asking for you, sir.' The boy went in to his father, who said: 'I have just received orders from Seoul appointing me to a post in the capital. I shall have to hand over the records before I go, but you had better set off with the household tomorrow.'

When the boy heard his father's instructions, on the one hand he was pleased; but on the other he thought of Ch'un-hyang and felt a tightening in his chest as though the arteries in all his limbs were flooded and his insides were melting. Hot tears welled up in his eyes and rolled down his handsome face. His father noticed them: 'Why are you crying? Did you think I should stay in Namwŏn for the rest of my life? Start to get ready straight away so that you can leave tomorrow morning.'

The boy barely answered, but left and went to his mother's room. His mother was one of the best of women, and he told her about Ch'un-hyang, but she only scolded him. He went to Ch'un-hyang's house, sadder than he thought he could bear to be. He had to check his tears on the way, but they forced themselves out of his eyes like bubbles on bean-curd. When he reached her gate he could bear it no longer and his grief broke forth in sobs and weeping.

Ch'un-hyang was startled and rushed outside: 'Oh dear! Whatever is the matter? Have your parents been angry with you? Did something terrible happen on the way? Have you had news of a death from Seoul? What's the matter with you?'

She fell on the boy's neck and wiped the tears from his face with the edge of her skirt: 'Stop crying; do stop crying.'

The boy was so upset that her sympathy made him cry the more. She grew impatient: 'Stop it! I don't like you crying like that, with your mouth open like a fireplace. Stop crying and tell me what it's all about.'

'My father has been posted to Seoul.'

Ch'un-hyang was pleased: 'But that's good news for the family. What are you crying for?'

'But it means I've got to leave you. Don't you expect it to upset

me?'

'Did you think you were going to live in Namwŏn for ever? Did you think that I could go with you now? You will have to go first, and when I have sold the things that have to be sold, I will soon follow you, so stop worrying. If you do as I say, we shall have no trouble; but when I go to Seoul, I shall not be able to live in your father's house. If you can get a little place nearby, just a couple of rooms, that will be good enough. See what you can do. Even if my whole family comes, you will not have to feed us. We shall get along somehow or other. Just trust me. You will have to get married sometime. They will choose you a *chaste and modest maiden* from a rich and honored family of ministerial rank, but when you go with her to pay your respects to your parents at morning and evening, don't forget me altogether. When you have passed the state examinations and attained government rank, and first go out as a new graduate, you will be able to take a secondary wife. Then everything will be settled.'

'Is that what you think? I daredn't tell my father about you, and when I told my mother she was angry beyond words. She said that if a gentleman's son comes to the provinces with his father, then goes out and takes a mistress, and the fact gets known at court, he never stands a chance of being accepted. There is nothing for it. We must be parted.'

When Ch'un-hyang heard this, her face suddenly lost its color. She looked around this way and that, she frowned with flashing eyes, she contracted her brows, her nostrils flared, she ground her teeth, her whole body curled up like a broom-corn leaf. She came down like a hawk pouncing on a pheasant; 'What do you mean by that?'

She stamped, tore her skirt, threw the pieces about, pulled her hair out in handfuls and threw it at him; 'Why has all this happened? All these things are useless!' She picked up the big mirror and her coral hairpin and threw them out of the door, still stamping her feet, and pounding her hands together, till she turned round and collapsed on the floor. How she wailed in her distress!

Ch'un-hyang without a husband!

What need has she of household things?

Who will be pleased if she makes herself pretty?

This is a criminal's destiny!

At the tender age of fifteen

How can I bear to be parted?

I count for nothing: lying words

*Have laid up for me a life of grief.
Oh, oh, the pity of it!*

Then she turned round and said calmly: 'Now look here: is it true what you've just said? Or are you joking? When we two first met and married each other, did your father and mother approve of it? Why are you trying to make excuses? We saw one another for a little while at the Kwanghal-lu, then you came here to look for me, late at night when no one was about. You sat there and I sat here, and you told me that you would never break your promise. Last year at Tano, it was. You held my wrist and we went outside, and as we stood in the court you pointed to the shimmering sky and repeated your promise ten thousand times. I believed you entirely. Parting when we grow old would be natural, but how can a girl of my age live without a husband? How can I bear the long autumn nights alone in an empty room? Oh, the pity of it, the pity of it! It's cruel, cruel! It's evil, you Seoul men are evil! You are hateful! High-born and humble can never be matched! The love of husband and wife lets the man be the master everywhere in the world, but where in the world is there such a cruel man as you? Oh, oh, it's all my fault! Don't think that you can throw me off and be done with me because I'm humbly born. Unhappy Ch'un-hyang will not be able to eat or sleep: how long do you think she'll stay alive? I shall soon pine away, wretched creature that I am, and die. My wretched ghost will linger here and haunt you. Think what that will do to you! You can't treat me like this—how can you even think of doing it? I want to die, I want to die! Oh, what misery!'

While she was wailing and weeping like this, her mother, who did not know what was happening, heard her: 'Oh dear, those two are having another lovers' quarrel. I'm fed up with them. I shall be seeing a lot of red eyes.'

But as she listened, the crying sounded worse, so she put down her work and went and stood quietly outside Ch'un-hyang's window. She soon understood that they were parting: 'This is quite another matter.'

She clapped her hands and said: 'Hear me, neighbors! Two people are dying in our house today.'

She ran quickly up on to the little verandah, beating on the door with her fists: 'You little wretch, you'd better die. There's no point in living. At least he'll see you to your grave. If he goes, who'll look after you? You little idiot, listen to me. I always told you you would regret it, told you to find someone of your own station to marry. Then you

could have stayed with me and we should both have been happy. But you were always too high-minded, different from the rest of us, and now see what's happened!'

Pounding her hands together, she rushed at the boy: 'Now talk to me a minute! Why are you forsaking my daughter? What has she done wrong? She's been with you for nearly a year; what fault have you to find with her? Is it her manners? Is her sewing bad? Has she been rude to you? Has she been unfaithful to you and been with other boys? What has she done wrong? Why are you leaving her? Don't you know that there are only seven faults for which a man may abandon his wife? When you loved my little Ch'un-hyang, day and night, sitting, standing, lying, embracing, you said: "We will never live apart for a hundred years, for thirty-six thousand days." But now you are going to cast her off. Where will the myriad willow-branches be when the spring breeze has passed? When the flowers have fallen and the leaves have dropped, what butterfly will come again? Now she is as pretty as a piece of jade, but as time passes the flowers in her cheeks will fade, and she will grow white-haired. Time goes, time goes, and does not come again. She can never regain her youth.'

'What has she done wrong that you should condemn her to endless misery? After you have gone, she will go on thinking of you, and when the moon is full her worries will pile up on her in the middle of the night; she will think of her master and go outside, walking up and down the garden paths, bearing the weight of the longings in her breast. She will lift her hand to wipe her tears and sigh deeply as she points toward the north and wonders whether her lord still loves her or has forgotten her, because he never sends her a letter. Then she will go back into the house, her face and dress stained with tears, and lie down without getting undressed. There will be nothing but the bare wall to comfort her lonely pillow; she will weep day and night. Sickness is nothing to this. If I cannot cure this wasting melancholy, and she dies, I shall lose my daughter when I am nearly seventy. I shall have no son-in-law; I shall be left alone like a crab's leg dropped from a jackdaw's beak on T'aebaek-san. Who shall I be able to trust? Who will look after me? Don't do what no one else would do. Oh, oh, it's terrible! You can't do it! For the sake of a few people's convenience, you are leaving her behind, you two-faced monster! Oh, it's awful—it's bitterly hard!'

She was throwing herself about. If the governor should get to hear of it, there would be terrible trouble. The boy said: 'Mother-in-law, see here: will everything be all right if I can take Ch'un-hyang with me?'

'Of course; your leaving her is what I can't endure.'

'Don't shout like that. Sit down and listen to me. If I say I will take Ch'un-hyang, she will have to ride in a palanquin or on a horse, and in that case everybody will know about it, and that will never do. I have a plan for getting out of this dilemma, but I can't tell you what it is because it will not only ruin me but it would be an offence to my ancestors if it got out.'

'Whatever nonsense are you talking?'

'When the household sets out tomorrow, the palanquin with the ancestral tablets will be at the end of the procession, and I shall be in charge of it.'

'And so....?'

'Haven't I told you enough?'

'I don't understand at all.'

'I will take the tablets out and carry them in the sleeve of my robe. Then Ch'un-hyang can ride in the palanquin. There is no other way. You must not worry about it.'

'When Ch'un-hyang heard this, she looked straight at him and said: 'Don't do it. Mother, don't drive him too far. Our lifelong happiness is in his hands, and we must leave it to him. It is clear that we shall have to part now, and if we must part, there is no reason to keep on nagging at him. It's my destiny. Please go to your own room now.'

She turned to Mong-nyong: 'Tomorrow is the day we must part.'

Oh, oh, the pity of it! How shall I say goodbye? Look at me.'

'Why?'

'Are we really going to part?'

They lit the candle and sat facing one another thinking of the next day's parting, sighing and weeping, stroking each other's faces.

'How many more nights will you see me? It's unlucky to mention it, but tonight is our last night together, so let me tell you how I feel. My mother is nearly sixty years old, and she has no relations except me. She had looked forward to being honorably cared-for by you, but some envious spirit has done us harm and brought us to this pass. Oh dear, it's all my fault! When you have gone to Seoul, who shall I be able to rely on? How shall I bear the thousand pains and sorrows in my breast by day and night? How shall I enjoy walking by the water when the plum and peach are in bloom? How shall I relish the season when the golden chrysanthemums and the red maples are fading? I shall toss and turn alone in the dark night in my empty bedroom. My rest will be sighs, my work will be tears. How shall I bear the sound of the cuckoo crying under the moonlight in the silent hills, or the cry of the

wild goose calling its mate in the cold and frosty skies? All the wonders of the four seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter, will be a burden to me. Everything I hear will bring me sorrow.'

While she was crying the boy said: 'Ch'un-hyang, don't cry! The poet said:

The husband went on duty in the borders of Kansu

And the wife remained at home in Yu,

and soldiers' wives have to stay alone in the inner court far from their husbands and longing to see them. Another poem says:

How far is it to the mountain borders

Where my husband is on guard?

These were the thoughts of newly-married women as they stayed at home cutting lotus-roots in the lonely autumn moonlight. When I have gone to Seoul and the moon shines bright through your window, please don't pine for me. Do you imagine I shan't be thinking of you a dozen times a day? Don't cry, don't cry.'

Ch'un-hyang went on crying: 'But you are going where the spring wind ruffles the apricot blossoms, and there are drinking songs in every street, and pretty girls in every house, and music in every corner, and temptations everywhere. You like pretty things, and day and night you will be restraining yourself. You will think no more of a humble girl like me than you think of a fangmail clipping. Oh dear, it's all my fault!'

'Ch'un-hyang, don't cry. There are lots of pretty girls all over the city of Seoul, but you are the only one with whom I want to share the secrets of the inner rooms. Even though I am a man, do you think I can ever forget you?'

They loved one another so much that it seemed impossible that they should part. Then the servants who were to accompany him to Seoul came hurrying in: 'Young master, you must come at once. There is trouble at home. Your father is asking where you are. I told him you had gone out to say goodbye to your friends. You must hurry!'

'Is the horse ready?'

'It is all ready now.'

The white pony whinnies and strains to go

The pretty girl grieves, and clings to my coat.

Now the horse is pawing the ground and wants to go, but Ch'un-hyang runs down the steps, and catches hold of the boy's leg: 'Kill me and go. If you want me to live, you must stay.' The words were hardly out before she fell in a faint.

Her mother rushed out: 'Hyang-dan, bring some cold water quick-

ly! Make some tea and some medicine! Oh, this wicked girl of mine, how can she do such things to her old mother?

Ch'un-hyang came round: 'Oh dear, I'm stifling.'

Her mother turned to the boy: 'See what you have done to a healthy young girl! If this pure good girl should die, how shall I be able to live alone by myself?'

The boy replied wildly: 'Ch'un-hyang! Why do you carry on like this? Are you going to forget me?'

The sun was sinking over the river bridge

When clouds of sorrow rose

was said of Su T'ung-kuo, parting from his mother;

How far it is to the mountain borders

Where my husband is on guard

was said by the women of Yü and Yüeh when parted from their husbands;

We all wore dogwood in our hair,

But one of us has gone,

referred to the parting of the brothers of Lung-shan;

When you pass the western frontier

You will meet no friends

was said when friends parted at Wei-ch'eng. Partings like these, with little news, have been frequent, but there was always a day of reunion. Now when I go up to Seoul, I shall pass out top in the examinations, and then I shall come to fetch you. Stop crying and be good. If you cry too much your eyes will swell up and your throat will grow hoarse and your head will ache. The pillar outside a tomb cannot turn itself into the tablet inside the tomb in a thousand years; a tree of remembrance outside a window cannot bud again once spring has passed; heart-sickness sleeping and waking will kill you in the end. You will see me again, so stop being miserable.'

Ch'un-hyang resigned herself to the inevitable. 'All right. Let me give you some wine and something to eat before you go. Or if you won't eat before you go, take the nest of food-boxes which I will give you and when you stop to sleep, you can eat from them and think of me. Hyang-dan! Bring the food-boxes and the wine-bottle.'

She poured a cup of wine for him and her tears mingled with it as she gave it to him, saying: 'When you are on the way to Seoul and you see the weeping green willows by the water-side, think of me grieving far behind you. When fine rain falls in the sunshine, remember that the people coming and going on the road all have their sorrows. I'm afraid you will get sick and sore with riding; please turn in before

sundown to find a place to sleep, and on rainy days set out late in the mornings. You have no need to travel fast, so please take great care of yourself, because you are precious to me. Travel gently, as though you were on the tree-lined roads to the capital of Ch'in, and compose some poems as you go. Write me a letter now and then.'

The boy said: 'Never fear, you'll hear from me. When the Queen Mother of the West wanted to meet King Mu of Chou, she sent a pair of bluebirds to take the news over the thousand-league distance; when Su Wu was a prisoner of the Huns, he sent news of his survival to the Han emperor Wu-ti at Shang-lin by tying the message to the leg of a wild goose. We have neither bluebird nor white goose, but there must be somebody who will carry a message to Namwön. Stop worrying; goodbye!'

So he bade farewell and mounted his horse. Ch'un-hyang burst out again: 'He said he was going, but I didn't believe him. Now he's on his horse, and I know it's really true.'

She shouted to the groom: 'Groom! I can't go outside the gate; hold the horse and make him wait a minute. I have something else to say to the master.'

She ran after him: 'Tell me, when are you coming back?'

Cut off without news for four seasons, *ch'öl*

I am bidding you farewell for a long time, *yöng'öl*

Evergreen pine and bamboo, the ancient loyalty of Po-i and Shu-ch'i, *ch'ung'öl*

Splendor of flying birds among a thousand peaks, *chobi-j'öl*

Lying in sickness cut off from others, *insa-j'öl*

Joints of bamboo, *chukch'öl*

Joints of pine, *song'öl*

Spring, summer, autumn, winter, four seasons, *si'öl*

Breaking off, *tanj'öl*

Dividing, *punj'öl*

Surrendering, *hwe'öl*

My husband leaving me remorselessly, *pakch'öl*

My hopeless constancy, *chöng'öl*

When I sleep alone in an empty room, faithful, *su'öl*

Shall I ever think of breaking faith, *p'aj'öl*?

A woman's misery is bitterness, *ko'öl*

Night and day my thoughts will never cease, *mi'öl*

I beg you do not leave me without news, *tonj'öl*!

She threw herself down on the ground outside the gate, pounding

the earth with her white hands: 'Oh, oh, the pity of it!' In that single cry:

*The yellow dust was blown about in the mournful wind,
The banners and the sunshine lost their brilliance.*

She lay there not knowing how long her sorrow would last.

The young master's horse was swift. He shed tears as he went, but he was already thinking of his return as he whipped the horse and disappeared like a cloud borne on a gale.

Ch'un-hyang could do nothing but return to her room: 'Hyang-dan! Pull down the blind, lay the pillow and cushions out for me, and shut the door. I don't know whether I'll ever see him again in this life, so I'll try to sleep and perhaps I'll see him in a dream. There's an old saying that a lover seen in dreams will be unfaithful, I know, but if I don't see him in a dream how shall I see him? Come, my dreams, come to me. My sorrows are piled up so deeply, what shall I do if I cannot dream? Oh dear, it's all my fault.'

'Mankind is born for partings, but how can I bear this empty room? Who can understand how desperately I want to see him again? I am so distraught and bewildered that whether I lie down to sleep, or wake and try to eat, I feel choked by my longings. I yearn to see his handsome face and hear his voice ringing in my ears. Oh, I want to see him again! I want to see him! I want to hear him again! I want to hear him!'

'What enemy from a former life arranged that we should be born like this, to love one another, to vow that we should never forget one another but live together till death, a vow more precious than gold or jewels—why should the world come between us? A spring should grow into a stream: how could I know that our love, piled high like mountains upon mountains, would crumble like this? Some evil spirit has harmed us, or creation envies us. When shall I see again the husband I parted from this morning? I have plumbed the depths of a thousand griefs and ten thousand sorrows.'

'My face and hair will grow old and useless, and the sun and moon will give me no joy. On autumn nights the moon will shine through the paulownia branches and make me sad. The sunshine on the summer leaves will only make me miserable. Even if he knows how much I love him, and he loves me too, I shall still be lying alone in this empty room with no company save my sighs and tears wrung from my tortur-

ed heart. I will collect my tears to make a sea, and my sighs to make a breeze, and sail a little boat to Seoul to seek my love. In the sadness of the moonlit nights I will pray for him with tears—and he will shine in my dreams.

'The cuckoo crying in the moonlight may reach the ears of my beloved, but only I shall know my sorrows. In the gloom of the night, the fireflies gleam outside the windows; I sit up at midnight wondering whether he shall come. Even though I lie down, shall I be able to sleep? Neither sleep nor my lover shall come. What can I do? Fate is cruel.'

'After joy comes sorrow; after the bitter, the sweet,' is an old saying, but there seems no end to waiting, and who can unravel the sorrows of my heart except my own beloved?

'High heaven, look down kindly and let me see him soon. Let us meet again to complete our love, and never part till the white hairs of old age fall in death. Green waters and blue hills, I beg of you! I was suddenly deprived of my love, and no news comes; he must be made of wood or stone. Oh dear, the pity of it!'

She passed her time praying and grieving. Meanwhile the boy, as he stopped for the night on his way to Seoul, could not sleep: 'I want to see her, I want to see my love. Day and night the thought of her never leaves me. She is longing for me, let me see her soon and satisfy her.'

So the day and months passed, and he looked forward to his name appearing in the list of examination successes.

III

After some months a new governor was appointed to Namwŏn, Pyŏn Hak-to, of Chaha-dong, in Seoul. He was a famous author and a fine figure of a man, well-versed in music and widely respected, but he had one fault: he sometimes behaved irresponsibly, forgot his morals and made errors of judgment. So it was commonly said of him that he was unusually stubborn.

The officials of his new post presented themselves:

'The staff are all present, sir.'

'The chief clerk.'

'The steward.'

'The chamberlain.'

'Call the chief clerk forward.'

'Chief clerk here, sir.'

'Is there anything to report from your district?'

'Everything is in good order, sir.'

'I hear that the men in your department are the best in the three southern provinces.'

'Yes, sir, they work well.'

'They say there's a very pretty girl there, called Ch'un-hyang.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Is she well?'

'She is very well, sir.'

'How far is Namwŏn from here?'

'Six hundred and thirty li, sir.'

'Pyŏn grew impatient: 'Let's get started quickly.'

The staff withdrew, saying to each other: 'Things are going to happen when we get home.'

It was soon time for the new governor's departure, and he set off in magnificent array. He was surrounded by litters and palanquins; banners fluttered in the wind; the yamen servants, dressed in brightly-colored coats with bandoliers of white cloth, and wide-brimmed felt hats, decorated with tortoiseshell ornaments, worn low on their brows, carried the banners: 'Make way, make way!'

The bodyguard was formidable; on either side were servants leading bridled horses. Two men in military felt hats carried whips, and followed behind the cavalcade with the chamberlain, the steward, the officer of works and the chief clerk of the new post. A pair of yamen slaves and two servants carried the great ceremonial parasol, supporting it from before and behind, and sometimes from the sides. It was made of white flowered silk, with a broad border of indigo brocade, and the metal rings around the edge tinkled as it moved. The noise of the guard echoed through the hills, and the shouts of the grooms resounded from the clouds. When they arrived at Chŏnju, he reported at the Kyŏnggi-jŏn of the official guest-house and paid his respects to the garrison. He passed quickly through the hills to the south of the city, crossed the pass at Mannagwan, passed the Nogu rock and did not stop as he went through Imsil. At Osu he stopped for lunch. When he arrived at Namwŏn later in the day all the men of the garrison and the servants of the local government came out to meet him at the Ori pavilion. As he passed through the garnished streets there was a great din from the two men who swept the path in front of him, two carriers of the Red Gate banners, the two bearers of the Banner of the Scarlet Bird, made of red silk with indigo flowers, the two bearers of the Azure Dragon banner of blue silk, the two bearers of the black banner with red

flowers of the Sable Tortoise, the two banners of the watch, the two banners of the garrison, the two officers of the guard, two color-sergeants, and twenty-four military slaves. The fanfares of the trumpeters shook the city, and the air rang with the music of the band and the shouts of the grooms.

They stopped at the Kwanghal-Ju to marshal the procession, while the governor changed his clothes. He paid his respects at the guest-house and mounted an open carriage so that all the people could see him. He rolled his eyes fiercely as he left the guest-house and went to his official residence, where he sat down to his meal of welcome. When it was over the officials came to greet him: the officers of the garrison, the master of the rites, and the officials of the six departments. The governor ordered them: 'Call the master of the slaves, and tell him to muster the kisaeng.'

The chief secretary, when he received this command, brought out the register of kisaeng and called their names in order, with a verse of poetry for each:

'After the rain on the eastern hills: Full Moon'

Full Moon came in, her gauze skirts rustling as her slender form moved daintily to report before the governor: 'I am here.'

'The fisherman's boat follows the stream'

Through the flowering hills of spring: Peach Blossom'

Peach Blossom walked daintily in, clutching the edge of her crimson skirt, and presented herself before the governor: 'I am here.'

'The phoenix of Tan-shan has lost its mate'

And roosts in the paulownia tree:

A spirit of the hills,

A wraith among birds,

It starves, but cannot eat millet,

A bird of eternal loyalty: Painted Phoenix'

Painted Phoenix came in, her gauze skirt gracefully gathered around her slender body, walking with mincing steps to present herself before the governor: 'I am here.'

'The purity of the lotus never changes,

Is not this the loveliest of flowers? Lotus Heart'

Lotus Heart came in trailing her gauze skirt and moving slowly in her embroidered shoes as she walked before the governor: 'I am here.'

'Like a peerless moon over the sapphire sea'

The white stone of Ching-shan, Bright Jade'

Bright Jade came in dressed in misty gauze, moving gracefully before the governor to present herself: 'I am here.'

*'The clouds are light, the breezes gentle,
No one is near,*

Gold shines among the willows; Oriole!'

Oriole came in trailing her crimson skirt as her slender form moved daintily to report before the governor: 'I am here!'

The governor said: 'Call them more quickly!'

'Yes, sir.'

The secretary, in response to this command, called each of them with brief couplets:

'The fairy girl who offered peaches

In the palace of the moon: Cinnamon Fragrance!'

'Here I am.'

'Little boy under the pine-tree, tell me

What news of the master among the green hills: Misty Deep!'

'Here I am.'

'Going up to the moon-palace

To pluck a cinnamon flower: Love-token!'

'Here I am.'

'I ask where the wine-shop is;

The herdboy points to the Apricot Blossom!'

'Here I am.'

'Half-moon of autumn on O-mei Mountain;

The shadows follow the flowing stream, Water Fairy!'

'Here I am.'

'Playing on a lute of paulownia wood, Lutanist!'

'Here I am.'

'Noble lotus of the eighth moon,

Fill the autumn pool with color, Pink Lotus!'

'Here I am.'

'Knotted with cords of vermilion silk, Embroidered Purse!'

'Here I am.'

The governor spoke again: 'Call a dozen or so at once.'

The secretary began to call them more quickly: 'Sun-terrace Fairy, Moon Fairy, Flower Fairy!'

'Here we are.'

'Embroidered Fairy, Embroidered Jade, Embroidered Lotus!'

'Here we are.'

'Toy Jade, Orchid Jade, Crimson Jade!'

'Here we are.'

'The breezes fail in Fading Spring!'

'Here I am, I'm coming!'

When Fading Spring came in, it was clear that she thought she was very beautiful. Because she had heard that she was pretty, she had plastered her hair away from her forehead, well back behind her ears; and because she had heard about powder and rouge she had bought four yang and seventy cents' worth of coarse powder and spread it all over her face as though she were plastering a wall. She was as tall and lanky as a man, had gathered far too much of her skirt in her hand and was holding it so high that it nearly touched her chin. She walked like a swan on dry land, waddling forward to report before the governor: 'Here I am!'

Many of the kisaeng were very pretty, but the governor had heard a great deal about Ch'un-hyang, and was surprised that her name was not on the list. He called the master of the slaves and asked him: 'The roll of kisaeng has been called, but Ch'un-hyang was not called. Has she retired?'

The man replied: 'Ch'un-hyang's mother was a kisaeng, but Ch'un-hyang herself is not.'

The governor asked him again: 'If she is not a kisaeng, but has been brought up at home in the women's quarters, how has she become so well-known?'

The man answered: 'She is a kisaeng's daughter. She is so beautiful that when great gentlemen and writers and such-like come this way, they ask to see her, but both mother and daughter refuse. Not only the gentry, but even the men who live in the household, have not seen her once in ten years, much less spoken to her. However, it seems that by a strange dispensation of heaven your predecessor's son met her and was betrothed to her. When he left Namwŏn, he said that he would come to fetch her after he had been appointed to public office, and Ch'un-hyang believes this and is staying faithful to him.'

The governor was very angry: 'You fool! What sort of a gentleman would he be if, while he was still living under his father's care, and before he was married, he took a concubine from a kisaeng family? If you say such a thing again I will have you punished. Do you think you will put me off by talking like that? Stop prevaricating and fetch her.'

When the yamen guards who were to fetch Ch'un-hyang appeared, the chief clerk and the secretary said to the governor: 'Ch'un-hyang is not a kisaeng, but that's not all. Her betrothal to the former governor's son is a solemn matter. Although your ages are very different, please summon her as though she were of the same social rank as yourself. Otherwise we fear you may damage your reputation.'

The governor flew into a rage: 'If you delay any longer in fetching Ch'un-hyang, I will have every one of you demoted. Are you unable to fetch her?'

There was consternation in the yamen offices. They all began to say to one another: 'Sergeant Kim, Sergeant Yi, something dreadful is afoot.' 'Poor Ch'un-hyang will find it hard to stay faithful.' 'The governor is in a rage.' 'Go quickly....' 'Hasten!'

The servants and the yamen slaves went in a body to Ch'un-hyang's house. Ch'un-hyang knew nothing about their arrival; she was thinking night and day of nothing but her husband. Her crying could be heard through the blinds. The voice of the deserted girl was compulsively raised in sad moans and wails, and anybody who saw or heard her was wounded in his own heart. Her longing for her husband took the taste from her food, and robbed her rest of sleep; yearning for him drew her skin tightly over her bones and made her weak. She sang a mournful dirge:

I want to go, I want to go,
I want to follow my love;
I will go a thousand *li*,
I will go ten thousand *li*,
I want to go to him.

I will go through storm and rains,
I will go over the high peaks,
Where sparrow-hawks and peregrines fly,
Beyond the Tongsol Pass.

If he will come to find me,
I will take off my shoes
And carry them in my hands,
To run to him faster.

My husband is in Seoul
And does he think of me?
Has he forgotten me completely?
Has he taken another love?

She was crying like this when the yamen servants heard her moaning. Since they were not wood and stone, how could they not be moved? All the joints of their bodies melted like spring ice on the

Naktong River: 'How pitiful! What sort of men are we, who can do nothing to help a girl like that!'

Then one of the servants shouted: 'Come on out!'

Ch'un-hyang was surprised by the noise and peeped through the crack of the door. She saw the soldiers and servants gathering: 'Oh, I had forgotten! Today is three days after the arrival of the new governor, and they are doing the third-day inspection. What a row they are making!'

She opened the sliding door: 'Hey, guards, come here, come here! We weren't expecting you. Aren't you tired after your journey with the new governor? How is he doing? Did none of you go to the old governor's house, and bring me a letter from the young master? When he was with me, I was very unwelcoming to you because I had to respect his position, but I didn't forget you. Come in, come in!'

She took Kim, Yi and several of the others by the hand, pulled them into the room and made them sit down. Then she called Hyang-dan: 'Bring in a table of wine!'

When they had drunk and were slightly tipsy, she opened a box and took out five *yang*: 'Please take this and buy yourselves something to drink on the way, and don't say anything about it afterward.'

The men were fuddled with the wine. They said: 'You mustn't give us money. Do you think we came for money? Put it away again.'

'Kim, you take it.'

'It's against the rules, but there are a lot of us....' He took the money; but as they were turning to go, the chief kisaeng came along clapping her hands: 'Come on, Ch'un-hyang, do as you are told! I'm as constant as you are! I'm as chaste as you are! Why are you making such a fuss about being chaste and faithful? Just for the sake of your virtue, you pretty little miss, the whole yamen is in trouble and everybody is likely to lose his job. Come on quickly! Get along fast!'

Ch'un-hyang came reluctantly out of the gate, leaving her retirement: 'Don't treat me like this, madam. You have your position and I have mine. We must all die once, and no one can die twice.' So they hobbled along together to the yamen.

'Ch'un-hyang's here.'

When the governor saw her, he was delighted: 'This is Ch'un-hyang, for sure. Come up on the dais.'

She went up and sat down meekly. The governor, entirely bewitched, gave an order: 'Go to the office and tell the treasurer to come here.' The little treasurer was already on his way in. The happy governor said: 'Look at her now. That's Ch'un-hyang.'

'Men... She's a pretty little piece. Very well formed. When we were in Seoul you kept talking about Ch'un-hyang. She's worth looking at.'

The governor laughed: 'Will you play the marriage-broker?'

The treasurer sat down: 'Oh, you shouldn't have called her yourself first. It would have been more proper to send a go-between. Things have been done a little carelessly. But now you have gone so far, there's really nothing you can do but marry her.'

The governor enjoyed the joke, and then said to Ch'un-hyang: 'From today you must dress yourself properly and start to attend on me in the yamen.'

'Your commands must be respected, but since I am married I cannot do as you say.'

The governor laughed: 'A pretty girl, a pretty girl! And a virtuous woman too! Your chastity is wonderful. You are quite right to reply like that. But young Yi is the eldest son of a famous family in Seoul, and do you think he regards you as anything more than a flower he plucked in passing? You are a faithful child and while you keep faith the bloom will fade from your face, your hair will grow white and lose its lustre. As you bewail the vain passing of the years, who will there be to blame but yourself? However faithful you remain, who will recognize it? Forget all that. Is it better to belong to your governor or to be tied to a child? Let me hear what you have to say.'

Ch'un-hyang replied: '*A subject cannot serve two kings, and a wife cannot belong to two husbands*; that is my principle. I would rather die than do as you say, however many times you ask me. Please allow me to hold to my ideal: I cannot have more than one husband.'

The treasurer spoke to her then: 'Look here, now; that lad is fickle. Life is no more than a mayfly, and men are all the same. Why should you take so much trouble? His Excellency proposes to lift you up in the world. What do you singing girls know about faithfulness and chastity? The old governor has gone and the new governor has arrived: it's proper for you to obey him. Stop talking strangely. What have loyalty and faithfulness to do with people of your sort?'

Ch'un-hyang was amazed. She relaxed her posture and said: 'A woman's virtue is the same for high ranks and low. If you listen I will explain. Let's speak of kisaeng. There are no virtuous ones, you say; but I will tell them to you one by one: Nong-sŏn of Haesŏ died at Tongson Pass; there was a child kisaeng of Sŏnch'ŏn who learned all about the Seven Reasons for divorce; Non-gae is so famous as a patriot that a memorial was erected to her and sacrifices are offered

there; Hwa-wŏl of Ch'ŏngju had a three-storied pavilion raised in her memory; Wŏl-sŏn of Pyŏngyang has a memorial; Il-chi-hong of Andong had a memorial erected in her lifetime, and was raised to the nobility; so do not belittle kisaeng.'

Then she turned to the governor again: 'Even a mighty man like Meng Pen could not wrest from me my determination to stay a faithful wife and keep the oath, high as the mountains and deep as the sea, that I made to young master Yi. The eloquence of Su Ch'in or Ch'ang Yi could not move my heart. Chu-ko Liang was so clever that he could restrain the southeast wind, but he could not change my heart. Hsü Yu would not bend his will to Yao; Po I and Shu Ch'i would not eat the grain of Chou. Were it not for Po I and Shu Ch'i there would be no high-principled ministers; were it not for Po I and Shu Ch'i there would be many more criminals and robbers. I may be of humble birth, but I know these examples. If I forsook my husband and became a concubine, it would be treason as much as it is for a minister to betray his king. But the decision is yours.'

The governor was furious: 'Listen, girl: treason is a capital offence, and insulting royal officers is equally serious. Refusing to obey a governor meets the same punishment. Don't put yourself in danger of death.'

Ch'un-hyang burst out: 'If the rape of a married woman is not a crime, what is?'

The governor in his fury pounded the writing-desk with such force that his hat-band snapped and his top-knot came undone. His voice grew harsh: 'Take this girl away,' he shouted. The yamen guards and servants answered: 'Yes, sir,' and ran forward to catch Ch'un-hyang by the hair and drag her away.

'Slaves!'

'Yes, sir!'

'Take this girl away.'

Ch'un-hyang trembled: 'Let go of me!'

She had come halfway down the steps when the slaves rushed up: 'You stupid woman, if you talk to the officers like that, you'll never save your life.'

They pulled her down to the ground of the courtyard. The fear-some soldiers and yamen servants swarmed around her like bees and grabbed her hair, black as black seaweed, coiled like a kite-string on its reel in springtime, like a lantern on Buddha's birthday, coiled tightly. They threw her down on the ground. It was pitiful. Her white jade body was crumpled up like a figure six; she was surrounded by grim soldiers holding spears, clubs, paddles and red cudgels.

'Call the executioner.'

'Bow your heads, the executioner comes!'

The governor had recovered a little, but he was still trembling and panting: 'Executioner, there is no need for any interrogation of this girl. Bind her to the frame immediately. Break her shin-bones and prepare the writ of execution.'

See what the jailers do while he binds her to the frame: the noise they make as they pile the paddles and clubs in armfuls beside the frame makes Ch'un-hyang faint.

Watch the executioner: he tries the paddles one by one, tests them for strength and suppleness, chooses one that will break easily and raises it over his right shoulder waiting for the governor's order.

'Receive your orders: if you pretend to beat her harder than you do, because you pity her, you will be punished on the spot. Beat her hard.'

The executioner replied loudly: 'Your orders will be obeyed. Why should we pity her? Now, girl, don't move your legs; if you do, your bones will break.'

He yelled as he danced about her brandishing the paddle. Then he stood still and said to her quietly: 'Just stand a couple of blows. I can't avoid it, but thrash your legs about wildly, as though it were hurting more than it does.'

'Beat her hard.'

'Yes, sir, I'll beat her!'

At the first stroke the broken pieces of the paddle flew through the air and fell in front of the governor. Ch'un-hyang tried to bear the pain but ground her teeth and flung her head back, screaming: 'What have I done?'

During the practice strokes, the executioner stood alone, but from the time he took the paddle to give the legal punishment, a servant stood facing him. Like a pair of fighting-cocks, as one stooped to beat, the other stooped to mark the tally, in the same way that ignorant penniless fellows in the wine-shop mark on the wall the number of cups they have drunk. He drew a line for the first stroke. Ch'un-hyang cried unrestrainedly:

One heart undivided,
Faithful to one husband,
One punishment before one year is over,
But for one moment I will not change.

All the townsfolk of Namwŏn, old and young, were gathered to watch what was going on: 'It's cruel! Our governor is cruel! Why should he punish a girl like that? Why should she be beaten so? Look at the executioner! When he comes out, we'll kill him!'

Everybody who saw and heard was weeping. Then came the second stroke:

Two spouses are faithful,
Two husbands there cannot be;
Though my body is beaten,
Though I die for ever,
I'll never forget master Yi.

The third stroke came:

Three rules for a woman's life,
Three principles of behavior, and five relationships:
Though I am punished three times,
I will never forget my husband,
Master Yi of Samch'ŏng-dong, the Three Springs Vale.

Then came the fourth stroke:

The governor is father of the people,
But he ignores the four social classes;
He rules by force and power
And has no love for the people
In the forty-eight quarters of Namwŏn.
Though my four limbs are severed,
Alike in life and death
I'll never forget young master Yi,
My husband.

The fifth stroke came:

The five relationships remain unbroken:
Husband and wife both have their station;
Our fate was sealed by the five elements,
And, sleeping or waking, I cannot forget my husband.
When the autumn moon shines on the paulownia where he is,
Will he send a letter to me?

Will there be a message tomorrow?
My innocent body does not deserve death.
Don't convict me unjustly.
Oh, oh, the pity of it!

The sixth stroke came:

Six times six is thirty-six,
And though I die sixty thousand times,
The body has six thousand joints,
All bound in love.
How can I change my heart?

The seventh stroke came:

If I have not broken one of the Seven Rules
Why should I receive seven punishments?
Take a seven-foot sword,
Cut me up and kill me quickly.
Executioner, do not spare me.
The seven jewels of my face must be destroyed.

The eighth stroke came:

The eight characters of my horoscope
Brought the governors of the Eight Provinces to meet me.
Are the governors of the Eight Provinces sent to rule the people
well,
Or are they sent to do them evil?

The ninth stroke came:

In the nine organs of my body
My tears have made a nine-years flood.
The tall pine-trees of the nine hills
Are cut and loaded on a river-boat
To go quick to Seoul!
And lay my case before the King
In the ninefold palace.
When I leave the nine courts
I will go to the Vale of the Three Springs and meet my love,

To relieve my heart and refresh my soul.

The tenth stroke came:

Though I live the tenth time
After escaping death nine times,
My mind is made up for the rest of my days
And a hundred thousand deaths will not change it,
But I cannot escape.
Ch'un-hyang at six and ten,
Poor devil under the cudgels,
Is hardly alive.

Ten strokes were expected, but she was beaten fifteen times:

The moon shines bright on the fifteenth night,
But is hidden in the clouds.
My beloved now in Seoul is hidden in Samch'öng-dong.
Moon, bright moon, do you see him?
Why can I not see where he has gone?

Twenty strokes would have been enough, but they went on to twenty-five:

Playing the lute of twenty-five strings,
In the moonlight I cannot restrain my sorrow.
Wild goose, where are you flying to?
If you go to Seoul,
Take a message to my beloved,
Who lives in Samch'öng-dong:
See what I look like now;
Take care you don't forget.

Her young mind craved to flee above the thirty-three heavens to the throne of the heavenly emperor. Her jade-white body was covered with blood, and she was bathed in tears. The blood and the tears flowed together, like peach-petals in the water when the man of Wu-ling found the hidden vale.

Ch'un-hyang cried in her bitterness: 'Do not treat a girl like this. Better kill me quickly, and when I am dead my soul will become a cuckoo like the bird of Ch'u, crying in the empty hills on moonlit nights

and breaking the dreams of young master Yi after he has gone to sleep.'

She could not finish her words before she fainted. The officers and servants turned their heads and wiped their tears. The executioner who had beaten her also turned away, wiping his eyes: 'No son of man should do such things.'

All the onlookers and officials standing round also wiped their eyes and looked away, unable to bear the sight. 'We shall never see anyone who takes a beating like Ch'un-hyang. Oh, it's cruel, it's cruel! Her chastity is cruel; her virtue is from heaven.'

Men and women, young and old, all alike were weeping, and the governor was displeased: 'Now, girl, you have been beaten for insulting the governor. What good has it done you? Will you persist in your disobedience?'

Half dead and half alive, Ch'un-hyang answered proudly: 'Listen to me, governor; don't you understand an oath that binds till death? A faithless woman brings frost in summer weather. My soul will try to the king and present its petitions. You will not escape; please let me die.'

The governor was exasperated: 'The girl is beyond reason. Put her in a cangue and send her to the prison.'

The big cangue was fastened round her neck and sealed. The jailer took the weight of it and as they came out of the third gate the group of kisaeng saw it: 'Poor Ch'un-hyang! Keep hold on your senses! Oh, how pitcous!' They stroked her limbs and offered her soothing drugs. They wept to see her. Just then the tall and stupid Fading Spring appeared: 'What on earth is going on? It looks as though the board for a memorial gate is being brought in.'

When she came closer and saw what it really was, she said: 'Poor Ch'un-hyang! How awful!'

While the commotion was going on, Ch'un-hyang's mother heard these words, and rushed wildly forward to throw her arms round her daughter: 'Oh! Why should this happen? What is her crime, and why was she beaten? Jailers! Chief clerk! What has my daughter done wrong? Officers! Executioners! What enemy has ordered this? Oh dear, it's all my fault! I'm nearly seventy, and I've no support. I have no sons and I brought up my only daughter so carefully and properly. I taught her to read and to study the rules of propriety for women, and she said to me: "Don't cry, mother, don't cry. Don't be sad because you have no son. Can't my children offer sacrifices for you when you die?" Her great devotion to her mother was not surpassed even by Kuo Chu or Meng Tsung. Does social class make any difference to love for one's

children? My soul will never rest. My sighs are wasting my heart away. Sergeant Kim! Sergeant Yi! Even though your orders were strict, why did you beat her so cruelly? Look at my poor daughter's wounds! Her legs were as white as snow, and now they are red with blood. If she had been the daughter of a well-born family, even a blind girl...! But she is only the daughter of the kisaeng Wöl-mae. How can such things happen? Ch'un-hyang, keep hold on your senses! Oh dear, oh dear, the pity of it!

'Hyang-dan, go outside the yamen and hire two runners. I am going to send them to Seoul.'

When Ch'un-hyang heard that the runners were being hired, she said: 'Mother, don't do it. What are you thinking of? If the runners go to Seoul and Mong-nyong sees them but does not know what to do about it, the worry will make him ill, which will make matters worse. Don't send them; I will go to the jail.'

She was carried on the jailer's back to the prison house, with Hyang-dan bearing the weight of the cangue. Her mother walked behind. When they got to the door of the jail: 'Keeper, open the gate. Are the keepers asleep?'

This is what the jail was like: the wooden bars were rotten, and a piercing wind came through them; through the cracks in the crumbling walls lice and fleas came in and attacked the whole of her body. This is the lament of Ch'un-hyang in the prison-house:

What was my crime?

I have not stolen government grain.

Why was I beaten so fiercely?

I am not a murderer.

Why am I put in the cangue and the stocks?

I have not broken the laws.

Why have I been bound hand and foot?

I have not committed adultery.

What is this punishment for?

I will take the waters of the rivers for ink

And the blue sky for my paper;

And protest my innocence,

A petition to the heavenly king.

My heart burns with longing for my husband,

My sighs are a wind that fans those flames,

I shall die with my love unrequited.

The chrysanthemum stands alone in the wind

In holy faithfulness.
 The green pine amid the snow
 Has kept faith for a thousand years.
 The green pine is just as I am,
 My husband is a gold chrysanthemum.
 My sad thoughts and the tears I shed
 Soak my sighs.
 I will use my sighs as a wind,
 My tears will turn to rain,
 The wind will drive the rain before it,
 Blown and splashed on my beloved's window to wake him.
 Stars of the Herdboy and the Weaving Maid,
 When they meet on the seventh night,
 Though the Milky Way divides them,
 Yet they never fail to meet.
 What waters divide me
 From the place where my beloved is?
 I never hear anything from him.
 Rather than live in longing,
 I would die and forget it all.
 Better this body should die
 And be a cuckoo in the empty hills,
 When the moon shines on the pear-blossom at night,
 To sing in my husband's ears;
 Or become a mandarin duck on the river,
 Calling in search of its mate.
 I long to see the light of love
 In my husband's eyes.
 Shall I become a butterfly in spring
 Gathering fragrance on my wings?
 Glorifying in the sunshine
 And settling on his clothes?
 I will be the bright moon in the sky.
 When night comes, I will rise
 And shed my bright beams
 On my beloved's face.
 I will draw blood from my veins
 And paint a portrait of my lord,
 Hang it as a scroll beside my door,
 And see it when I go out and in.
 Because I am chaste and faithful

I have been treated thus cruelly:
 Like fine white jade of Ching-shan
 Buried in the dust,
 Like fragrant plants of Shang-shan
 Buried in the weeds,
 Like a phoenix that played in paulownias
 Making its nest in a thorn-patch....
 In ancient days the virtuous sages
 Lived free from fault,
 Yao, Shun, Yü and T'ang were good kings,
 Chieh and Chou were tyrants:
 T'ang was imprisoned at Hsia-t'ai;
 But he became a holy king
 Who ruled the people virtuously.
 King Wen of Chou
 Was hurt by Chou of Shang,
 Imprisoned in the jail of Yu-li;
 But he became a holy king.
 The greatest of all sages, Confucius,
 Because he resembled Yang-hou
 Was imprisoned at K'uang-yeh;
 But he became the light of China.
 When I think of all these things
 My innocence gives me hope
 That I may live to see the world again.
 Oh the stifling sorrow of it!
 Who will come to rescue me?
 Will my husband, now in Seoul,
 Come here as an officer?
 Here I am now close to dying—
 Will he come and save my life?
 The summer clouds flock round the peaks;
 Do the high hills bar his way?
 If the peaks of the Diamond Mountains
 Could be flattened, would he come?
 If the golden cockerel painted on the screen
 Flaps his wings and crows at dawn,
 Will my beloved come?
 Alas, alas, the pity of it!

The bamboo slats let in the tranquil moonlight, and the girl,

sitting there alone, implored the moon: 'Bright moon, do you see us? Lend me your light, for I too want to see the place where he is. Is he lying, is he sitting? Tell me what you see and relieve my sorrows.'

And so she cried herself to sleep. Whether it was a dream or whether it was true, whether Chuang-tzu dreamt he was a butterfly or the butterfly dreamt it was Chuang-tzu—her soul was carried away like a breeze or a cloud. Spirits move like the wind rising in the heavens, or they move through the earth, and

In a spring dream upon the pillow

She flew thousands of li to the south,

to a place where the sky was clear and the horizons were wide. Among beautiful mountains and streams, in a quiet grove of bamboo, stood a sequestered temple, painted in many colors. Over the front of the building in large golden letters was written:

HUANG-LING, SHRINE OF ALL FAITHFUL WOMEN.

As she stood there amazed and perplexed, three lovely women appeared: Lu-chu, the favorite wife of Shih Ch'ung, carrying a lantern; Non-gae, the kisaeng of Chinju; and Wôl-sôn, the kisaeng of P'yông-yang. They led Ch'un-hyang into the temple, where two women in white robes took her hands and asked her to go on to the dais, but she declined: 'How can a humble girl from the dusty world presume to go into the Huang-ling shrine?'

The women marvelled, but they asked her a second and a third time. She could refuse no more, and went up and took a seat. They said: 'Are you Ch'un-hyang? How wonderful! A little while ago when we went to attend the heavenly court at the Lake of Gems, we heard so much about you that we dearly wished to see you. That is why we asked you here; please do not take it amiss.'

Ch'un-hyang bowed as she replied: 'Although I am ignorant, I have read in old books that after death I might meet you; but I am anxious and puzzled to find myself here now in the Huang-ling temple.'

The two women, who were O-huang and Nü-ying, said: 'Our lord, the Emperor Shun, was carrying out a tour of inspection in the south when he died in the Ts'ang-wu mountains and we two useless women were left weeping for him in the bamboo groves by the Hsiao-hsiang rivers. Our tears stained the bamboo stems and leaves as an everlasting memorial of our sorrow:

When Ts'ang-wu-shan crumbles and the Hsiao-hsiang dry up

The tear-stains on the bamboo will still not fade away.

We had no one to tell our sorrows to; so we understand your steadfastness. Has the lute-song of the 'Southern Breeze' not handed down the story of the bamboos for thousands of years?

Then another woman said: 'Ch'un-hyang, I am the kisaeng Nung-yieh, who became a fairy when the flutes played in the moonlight in the pavilion of Ch'in. I was the wife of Hsiao Shun. After we parted at T'ai-hua-shan and he flew away on the dragon, I was left sorrowing, and tried to console myself by playing on the flute:

Where the tune fled to I do not know,

But the trees on the mountain budded like spring.

Then another woman spoke: 'I am Chao-chün. I was sent by mistake to marry a barbarian, and nothing resulted but the Verdant Tomb. In the *Song of the Mandolines on Horseback* it says:

The picture showed a beautiful face,

But only her jewels and her moonlit ghost remain.

Could anything be more pitiful?

As they spoke, a cold wind arose and made the candles flicker as something passed by them. Ch'un-hyang, frightened, saw that it was neither a man nor a ghost, but someone weeping bitterly.

'Ch'un-hyang, you do not know me, but I am the wife of the Emperor Kao-tsu of Han, the lady Ch'i. After my husband died, the Empress Lü cut off my hands and feet, burned my ears, gouged out my eyes, forced me to drink poison, and threw me into a cesspool. Nothing more wicked has ever been done.'

As she wept, Queen O-huang said: 'This is an abode of spirits, and you should not remain here too long.'

The queen called a maid-servant as though to leave; a cricket cried in the inner room, and a pair of butterflies fluttered away. Ch'un-hyang woke with a start. It had all been a dream.

A wild cherry seen through a window, a crack across a mirror, a corn-dolly hung over a door—these were the dreams of death. She passed the night in sorrow and grief. She thought she heard a wild goose flying southward over the west river in the moonlight. In the depth of the night it was raining miserably, the night-birds called like goblins, the paper on the door-frames flapped in the wind and the spirits howled: the spirits of those who had died fighting, the spirits of those who had been executed, the spirits of those who had been

hanged on gibbets, called from all directions. The night was full of ghostly wailings. In the room, at the corners of the eaves, under the floor, the groanings of the spirits made sleep impossible. At first Ch'un-hyang was terrified by the noise, but after a time her fear left her and she took no more notice of it than she would of the weird music played when a sorcerer raises spirits: 'You wicked spirits, if you want to take me away, please stop pestering me.'

Aunt! aunt! Begone, foul fiends!

She sat reciting charms, when a blind soothsayer passed by. He sounded as though he came from Seoul: 'Ask your fortunes!' But he was a simple country soothsayer. 'Ask your fortunes,' he cried as he went. Ch'un-hyang heard him: 'Mother, call that soothsayer.'

Her mother called him: 'You, blind soothsayer! Come here.'

The man answered: 'Who is that? who are you?'

'I am Ch'un-hyang's mother.'

'Why do you want me?'

'Ch'un-hyang wants to see you, in the jail.'

The soothsayer laughed: 'I never expected you to call me. All right, I'll come.'

The mother took hold of his stick and guided him along the road to the jailhouse: 'Come this way; this is the stone bridge. Here is the ditch. Be careful as you cross.'

The ditch was in front of them. He tried to jump with great care, but he could not jump very far, and through trying too hard he fell with a splash in the middle of the ditch. He crawled out, grabbing filth as he came. He swore as he came out: 'This filthy stuff is dung!' He raised his hands and smelt them; it was dung from a house where the food was putrid. As he struggled, he hit his hand on a sharp stone, and it hurt him so much that he put his hand in his mouth and cried, with the tears dripping from his sightless eyes:

'Oh dear, oh dear! What an evil fate is mine! I cannot cross a little ditch without a mishap. Everything seems to be against me. My troubles come from my blindness. I can't tell night from day. I guess at the seasons: in springtime I don't know whether the blossoms are open; in autumn I don't know when the chrysanthemums are gold and the maples are red; I don't know my parents; I don't know my wife; I don't know my friends. I cannot tell the sun and moon and stars; I cannot distinguish thick or thin, long or short. I live in eternal night, and now I have come to this. Rightly do they ask: *Is it the fault of the blind man or the ditch?* Yes, indeed, the blind man or the ditch?'

Ch'un-hyang's mother tried to console him: 'Come now, stop cry-

ing.' She helped him to get clean, and they went to the prison.

Ch'un-hyang welcomed him: 'Soothsayer, I'm glad you've come.'

The fortune-teller had heard of Ch'un-hyang's beauty, and he was delighted to hear her voice: 'Ch'un-hyang, you sound like a young girl.'

'Yes, I am.'

'I ought to have come and seen you before, but a poor man has to work hard, so I didn't come until you sent for me. Forgive my tardiness.'

'But you had no reason to come. You are blind and old. How is your health?'

'Don't let's talk about my affairs. Why did you send for me?'

'I want you to explain a bad dream I had last night and tell me when my husband will come back for me. I want to know what the future holds.'

This was the soothsayer's incantation:

Hear the faithful prayer of T'aesŏ when he prays: how will heaven speak, how will the earth declare? If one knocks, it will be opened, and the spirits are already here. Hear and speak, I beseech you. We cannot know whether good or evil comes, we cannot escape uncertainty. Ye gods and spirits alone can know these things and tell us. I beseech you now to tell me, to answer when I knock, and make clear both good and bad. Descry and declare, O spirits of Fu-hsi, King Wen, King Wu, great Chiang T'ai-kung and the Duke of Chou: Confucius and the Five Great Sages and seventy-two Disciples, Yen Hui, Tseng Ts'an, Tzu-szu and Mencius; the Ten Great Philosophers, Chu-ko Liang, Li Ch'un-feng, Shao K'ang-chieh, Ch'eng Hao, Ch'eng I, Chu Tun-i, Chu Hsi, Yen Ch'ün-p'ing, and Su-ma Kuang; Kuei-ku, Sun Pin, Su Ch'ün, Ch'ang Yi, Wang Pi, Emperor T'ai-su of Ming, and all the great masters!

Teacher of the Hempen Robes, Dark Daughters of the Ninefold Heavens, Spirit General Lin-ting, Spirits of the Sixty Periods that cause years, months, days and hours to match their stars, Fairy Boy that arranges the divining-sticks, Fairy Boy that collects the divining-sticks, you who perceive without senses! Descend to this our sacrifice and the incense on our altar; bright spirits, accept this precious fragrance!

The faithful wife Sŏng Ch'un-hyang was born in 1672 and lives in upper Chŏlla province at Námwŏn, by the stream; in what month on what day will she be released from prison?

Yi Mong-nyong lives in Seoul in Samch'ŏng-dong; on what day at what hour will he return to this place? With head bowed I pray the spirits to descry and announce these things.

He shook the case of divining-rods noisily: 'Now let's see: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Good! it's a lucky number: the Seven Good Mountains:

The fish leapt out of the net;

Many a mickle makes a muckle.

In ancient times, when King Wu of Chou received his rank, he drew this lot at the time when he returned to his home in his embroidered robes. It's a magnificent fortune!

Knowing they are a thousand li apart,

The friends will see each other.

That means without doubt that your husband will come back within a month and your life's sorrows will be ended. Never fear; all is well.'

Ch'un-hyang answered: 'All will be well, if it happens as you say. But please explain my last night's dream.'

'Tell me about it.'

'I saw my dressing-mirror crack, I saw cherry-blossom falling outside my window, I saw a corn-dolly hanging over the door, I saw a great mountain crumble, I saw the sea dry up. Doesn't it mean I shall die?'

The soothsayer thought for a while, and said: 'That dream is a very good one:

The flower falls so the fruit can form;

When the mirror breaks, the sound is loud;

A dolly over the door makes everyone look up;

When the sea dries, the dragon's face shows;

When mountains fall, the ways are smooth.

It's a most auspicious dream. It foretells the greatest honors. Do not worry, it will all happen soon.'

Just as he was saying this, a crow flew on to the jail-house wall and cawed twice. Ch'un-hyang raised her hands and frightened it away.

'Unlucky crow, if you have come to fetch me, stop pestering me!'

The soothsayer said: 'Just a moment. Doesn't the crow say:

"Kaok! Kaok!"'

'Why, yes, of course.'

'That's good. *Ka* is Chinese for good, and *ok* is Chinese for house; it will not be long before things turn out well and all your life's burdens will be loosened. Have no fear at all. If you were to give me a fee of a thousand *yang*, I wouldn't take it. Wait and see. When you gain riches and honor, don't forget me. Now I will take my leave.'

'Go in peace. One day we will meet again.'

But Ch'un-hyang went on passing the days in bitterness and sorrow.

IV

Meanwhile Yi Mong-nyong was in Seoul studying poetry and composition night and day. He made himself master of a hundred authors; he was comparable to Li Po in poetry, and his calligraphy would compare with that of Wang Hsi-chih.

Soon there was an extraordinary examination, and he took his writing-materials to the examination-ground. Looking around, he saw a great concourse of people, crowds of scholars bowing before the king at one time. The royal orchestra was playing court music, and the parrot dance was being performed. The rector of the Confucian college announced the theme appointed by the king, and the chief secretary posted it on the vermillion board. The subject for composition was: *Springtime in the examination-ground is the same today as yesterday.* Mong-nyong found the subject to his liking. He spread out his paper and slowly ground his ink while he sought for inspiration. Then dipping his golden weasel-hair writing-brush into the ink he began to write.

He wrote in the style of Wang Hsi-chih and according to the model of Chao Meng-fu. His brush flew over the paper, and he was the first to finish. When the chief examiner saw Mong-nyong's composition, every stroke was perfect and the couplets were like jewels on a thread. His calligraphy was strong, like dragons flying through the heavens. The verses had the rhythm of a flock of wild geese descending on the sand-flats. He was the genius of his times. After the list of successful candidates had been announced, and he had received three cups of wine from the king, he was declared the top graduate of the examination. When he came out from the royal presence, he had the winner's sprays of pink paper flowers fixed on his hat, and he was wearing the yellow silk robe of his new rank, with cranes embroidered on the back and chest.

After the usual three days of celebration, with processions and games in the streets, he paid his respects to the family graves and then presented himself before the king. The king spoke to him personally: 'The hopes of the court are set on you.'

Then he called a royal secretary and appointed Mong-nyong Royal Inspector of Ch'olla province. It was the post he had always wanted. His embroidered robes of office, his heavy brass warrants and his brass yardstick were delivered to him. He left the royal presence and went to his own home. His official hat made him look awesome as a tiger from the mountain valleys.

He said goodbye to his parents and set off for Ch'olla. Outside the South Gate of the capital, at Ch'ongp'a post station, he mustered his scribes, agents and postmen, and mounted his horse. He quickly passed the seventh and eighth markers and crossed the bridge of boats at Noryang-jin. Soon he had left Papch'on-g'ori and Tongjak-tong behind him, crossed over Namt'ae Pass and come down to Kwach'ön, where he stopped for lunch. He went on through Sag'umnae, past the Maiteya Temple on the way to Suw'ön, where he spent the night. He continued over the Taehwang Bridge, through Py'ongj'om, Ch'in'gae and Chung-mi, arriving at Chinwi Prefecture for lunch. On through Ch'irw'ön, across the fields of Sosa, over the Aego bridge to the post station at Söng'wan, where he spent the second night.

The next day they crossed the stream of the Yuch'ön twice, passed Saesulmak and arrived at the town of Ch'önan for lunch. They went on by the fork in the road, over the Tori pass to Kimje post station, where they changed horses, before speeding through New Tökp'yöng and Old Tökp'yöng to spend the next night at W'ön'gi. On the way to Kongju they passed the Arbor of the Eight Winds, the archery school, Kwangj'ong post station, and Morow'ön. Crossing over the Küm River into Kongju, he paid his respects to the military governor of Ch'ungch'öng province, and they had lunch. Then they crossed over the high road to Sogaemun, and Ominöl Pass, till they reached Kyöngch'ön, where they stopped again for the night. Then by Nösöng, Ch'öp'o, Sagyo and the magistracy of Ünjin, they passed by Chakchi and the Hwanghwa Pavilion, over the Chiamni Pass to the town of Yösan, where they stayed for the fifth night.

The next morning he summoned his scribes and agents and said: 'This is Yösan, our first town in Ch'olla province. We are now in the territory for which we are responsible, and if we fail in our duty we risk capital punishment.'

His voice was stern as autumn frosts, when he ordered the scribes:

'You will take the left-hand sector, travelling through the eight towns of Chinsan, Kumsan, Muju, Yongdam, Chinan, Changsu, Unbong and Kurye, and on such and such a day you will arrive at Namw'ön.

'Now the agents and postmen will take the right-hand sector, through the towns of Yong'an, Hamyöl, Imp'a, Okku, Kimje, Man'gyöng, Kobu, Pusan, Hüngdök, Koch'ang, Changsöng, Yönggwang, Mujiang, Muan and Ham'yöng, and arrive at Namw'ön on such and such a day.

'The remainder will travel through Iksan, Kümga, T'aein, Chöng-

üp, Sunch'ang, Okkwa, Kwangju, Naju, Ch'angp'yöng, Tamyang, Tongbok, Hwasun, Kangjin, Yöng'am, Changhüng, Posöng, Hüng-yang, Nagan, Sunch'ön and Koksöng, and present yourselves at Namw'ön on such and such a day.'

When they had departed their several ways, the inspector prepared himself for his journey. See what he looked like: no one would know him. His battered straw hat had no crown and was bound with wisps of barley straw; its hat strings were of the cheapest cord. The headband was all that remained of his topknot-cap. It had bone buttons, and was fastened with string. He wore a deceptively shabby coat, tied round the waist with a hank of yarn. Nothing remained of his fan but the ribs, and the two pine-cones hanging from its cords. It was his only protection against the sun.

He spent a night at Tongso'am, and another at Samnye. Then he went on toward Chönju, to visit Han'gye, Chuyöpchön'gi, Ch'uch'ön and Sin'günj'ong. He passed rapidly by Supchön'gi, the Kongbuk Pavilion, and the West Gate of Chönju. He climbed to the tower above the South Gate to look over the landscape. Southward from here was the heartland of the province. He saw the Eight Views of Chönju: the moon rising over Kirin Peak, the weather clearing at Hanbyök-tang, the evening bell at Nango Temple, the full moon over the peak of Kongji, the archery contests at Taga, lotus-digging at Tökchin Lake, the wild geese settling by the Piboi Pavilion, and the waterfall at W'ibong. In every town, prefecture and magistracy he heard what was going on and tried to catch the feeling of the people, investigating the things that had been done by the authorities. All the yamens were in consternation. The minor officials were afraid, and those who had charge of public money were prepared to take flight, for it was known that the inspection teams were coming.

Eventually he came to Imsil, and in the fields at Kuhwa he found the farmers working. They were singing a farmer's song, and great was the din they made:

Oyöro! Sangsadyö!

Peace and prosperity reign through the land,

High is the virtue of our king!

Once again the children sing

The songs that pleased the Emperor Yao—

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

The emperor Shun with highest power
Invented the art of making brass dishes
And ploughed the fields of Li-shan—

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

The Divine Husbandman made the hoe,
And it has lasted from then till now.
Wasn't that a mighty thing?

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

Yü of Hsia, the gentle king,
Brought an end to nine years' floods;

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

T'ang of Yin, the gentle king,
Suffered seven years of drought;
Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

We keep up the farmer's skill,
Pay the king our tax in grain,
Keep what's left to feed ourselves,
Looking up to serve our parents,
Looking down to wife and children.

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

So we set the hundred plants,
Tend them meetly in due season,
And they all bring forth their fruits—

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

What hope have we of rank and office?
What is finer than a farmer?

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

Tilling dry fields, ploughing paddy,
We feed our mouths and fill our bellies.

Oyōro! Sangsadwiyō!

Yi Mong-nyong stood leaning on his stick listening to them for a

while:

'It looks like a wonderful harvest this year.'

But to one side there was a strange sight. Some wiry old men were
banded together at work in a stony field. They were wearing reed hats,
and as they raked the soil they sang the *Song of the White-headed Men*:

Let's send up a petition!

Let's send up a petition!

Send a petition up to God

And see what he will say.

Let the old men never die,

Let the young men not grow old.

Let's send God a petition.

Oh how hateful, oh how hateful!

White hairs are our enemies.

We try to stop white hairs,

With an axe in one hand

And thorns in the other,

But white hairs come round behind.

They take away our ruddy cheeks,

Bind us in blue cords,

Bind us so we can't escape.

Rosy cheeks will fade away,

White hairs will surely come,

Wrinkles form beneath the ears,

All our black hair will turn white.

In the morning fresh and bright,

In the evening white as snow,

Time is heartless in its passing.

Youth's a season full of pleasure,

But the days run swiftly by;

Time's nature is to fly.

I want to ride a spanking pony,

Ride the highway up to Seoul,

I want to see the hills and valleys

Just once more before I die.

I want to meet a pretty maid

And sit beside her at a feast.

Morning flowers, midnight moonlight,

All the glories of the seasons

Are things I cannot see or hear,

Because my eyes and ears are failing,
And there is no remedy.

Oh how sad, how sad, my friend,
Whither are you going now?

Like the falling leaves of autumn

Slowly, slowly you're declining,

Like the morning star at daylight,

You are ever growing weaker.

Where's the path that you are taking?

Oyoro! this work of tilling!

This life of ours is nothing

But the dream of a spring morning.

After a time one of the farmers straightened his back and said:

'Let's have a smoke, let's have a smoke!'

In their pointed reed hats, they walked along the baulks between the paddies, proudly holding their soapstone pipes. They took their leather tobacco-pouches out of the back of their belts, spat on the tobacco and rammed it into the pipes with their thumbs. They lit a fire of chaff and stuck their pipes into the embers, drawing on them with a noise like the squeaking of baby mice. That is the farmers' way. Their cheeks swelled, their nostrils flared, until the pipes began to draw. Then they stood up to smoke.

Mong-nyong addressed them in familiar language: 'Let me have a few words with you.'

'What is it?'

'Is it true that there's a girl in this county called Ch'un-hyang, who has entered the governor's household and takes so many bribes that the ordinary people suffer through misgovernment?'

A farmer grew heated: 'Where do you live?'

'Oh, here, there and anywhere.'

'Oh, you live anywhere! Have you no eyes and ears? Just because she won't go into the governor's household, Ch'un-hyang has been beaten. You don't see many kisaeng's daughters make such faithful wives. Because some filthy beggar like you lusted after her white body, she can't eat and she's likely to starve. That young beggar Yi, who went and left her, has never sent a word of news to her. I don't care what rank he has risen to, he isn't worth the water in my chamber-pot.'

'Here, what do you think you're saying?'

'Why, what does it matter to you?'

'It doesn't matter, but you'd better watch your language.'

'You don't know what you're talking about, you don't.'

Mong-nyong broke off the conversation and turned away: 'That's right; it's only a matter of disgrace and humiliation. You carry on with your work.'

'Yes, sir.'

Mong-nyong had barely turned the next corner after leaving the farmers when a youth came toward him dragging a stick and chanting a poem, half *sijo* and half *sasöl*:

What's the date today?

How many days will it take

To cover the thousand *li* to Seoul?

If I had the fine grey steed

On which Chao Tzu-lung crossed the river,

I might get there today.

But, more's the pity, poor Ch'un-hyang,

Always thinking of young master Yi,

Shut up in prison,

Hovering on the point of death,

Never gets a word of news

From that wicked gentleman.

There's the gentry for you!

When Mong-nyong heard this, he said: 'Boy, where do you live?'

'In Namwŏn.'

'Where are you going?'

'To Seoul.'

'What for?'

'To take Ch'un-hyang's letter to the old governor's house.'

'Let me look at it.'

'You're a fine gentleman! You don't know your manners.'

'What's that?'

'Well, just think: it's bad enough to want to look at a man's letter, but you are asking to see a letter from somebody else's wife.'

'Now listen:

The traveler set out on his way,
And then the letter was opened,

said the poet Chang Chi. Let me have a look. What does it matter?

'You look bad, but your knowledge of books is extraordinary. Look at it quickly and give it back.'

'You ill-mannered oaf!'

Mong-nyong took the letter and unfolded it. This was what it said:
I have had no news of you since we parted, but I pray that you and your parents are in good health. I have fallen foul of the governor and been beaten. Now I am more dead than alive. I expect I shall die soon and my soul will pass into the shades, but even if I were to die ten thousand times I could not serve more than one husband. Whether I live or die, I do not know what will become of my poor mother. Please be kind to her and look after her for me.

At the bottom of the letter was written a quatrain:

Some time last year he left me.

Winter has gone, and autumn has returned;

Midnight winds and rain like snow—

How have I become a convict in Namwŏn?

The letter was written in blood. It was as regular as a flight of wild geese landing on the sand-flats, but every letter cried in pain. When Mong-nyong saw it his eyes filled with tears that dropped upon the paper. The youth said: 'Why do you cry at somebody else's letter?'

'You silly boy, even somebody else's letter, if it is sad, will make a man weep.'

'Look what you've done!—pretending to sympathize, you've messed the letter up with your tears. That letter cost fifteen *yang*—you must repay it!'

'Listen. Young master Yi was one of my childhood friends, and he was coming down to the country with me, but on the way he stopped in Chŏnju. He promised to meet me tomorrow at Namwŏn. If you come with me, you will meet him.'

The youth changed color: 'Do you think Seoul is just over there? He tried to grab the letter: 'Give it to me!'

Mong-nyong resisted him. The other caught the edge of his coat, and saw underneath, that Mong-nyong was wearing a silk purse at his waist, containing something that felt like a flat dish—the brass warrant. The youth stepped back: 'What's that you've got? Is that the way the wind blows?'

'You fool! If this matter gets out, I won't be answerable for your life.'

Mong-nyong carried on toward Namwŏn. As he came over the Paksŏk Pass into the town, he looked around and saw the familiar hills and streams. He came to the South Gate: 'Kwangha-lu, how have you been? Magpie Bridge, is all well?'

The willows are green and fresh before the guest-house

(That was where I tied the donkey)

The clear stream falls like a blue mist of water

(That was where I washed my feet)

The green trees line the road to the Ch'in capital

(That was the road I came and went on).

A group of girls were washing clothes under the Magpie Bridge:

'You know. . . .'

'What?'

'I feel very sorry for poor Ch'un-hyang. He's a cruel man, our governor, a cruel man. He tried to force her to serve him, but her faithfulness is beyond belief. Did he really think that the fear of death would break her iron will? Oh, he's heartless, that young master Yi, he's heartless!'

As they squatted over their washing, chattering away, they might have been the Princess Ying-yang, the Princess Lan-yang, Ch'in Ts'ai-feng, Kuei Ch'an-yieh, Po Ling-p'o, Ti Chung-hung, Shen Niao-yen, and Chia Ch'un-yŭn, all the girls of the *Nine Cloud Dream*, but where was Yang Shao-yu, their hero?

Mong-nyong went up into the pavilion and looked around again. The sun was going down in the west, and the birds were flying home to roost in the woods. Over there was the willow tree where Ch'un-hyang's swing had hung: he fancied he could see it flying to and fro again. To the east in the green shade of Changnim woods was Ch'un-hyang's house. The garden would be the same as ever, but beyond that high stone wall was the cruel prison where poor Ch'un-hyang was languishing. The sun was dipping behind the hill and dusk was gathering when he arrived at the gate of her house. The gate-lodge was dilapidated and the main building was losing its plaster. The phoenix tree still stood in the grove, but looked sad and neglected in the wind. The white cranes inside the walls must have been worried by the dogs as they walked about, for their feathers were bedraggled and they were crying mournfully. The old dog lay feebly in front of the gate. It did not even recognize an old friend, but got up to bark.

'You silly dog, stop barking. I'm as good as your master. Where's your mistress gone? Why are you the only one to meet me?'

He looked up at the gate of the inner court where he had written

and posted a Chinese inscription. The character for loyalty had lost its top part, so that only the bottom part, that means 'the heart', remained. The inscription he had written for the name of the building, *The House of the Crouching Dragon*, and the spring mottoes had been torn by the wind and were fluttering sadly.

He went slowly into the house. Everything was quiet. See what Ch'un-hyang's mother does: she was cooking gruel: 'Oh dear, it's all my fault! He's cruel, he's cruel, young Yi is cruel! My daughter will die, and he has forgotten her completely. He has cut her off without news. What grief is ours!

'Hyang-dan! Bring some more fuel.'

She came out, washed her hair in the runnel in the corner of the yard, combed it, and offered a bowl of clean water at the stone cain in the garden, prostrating herself and praying: 'Spirits of heaven and earth, sun, moon and stars, unite to hear my prayer! I have nurtured my only daughter, Ch'un-hyang, like a golden nugget, so that her children should remember me with sacrifices. Now she has been cruelly beaten and shut in the jail although she is innocent. There is no hope for her life. Heavenly spirits, exert yourselves, raise Yi Mong-nyong of Seoul to honor and glory, and save my daughter, Ch'un-hyang!

When she had finished praying, she called: 'Hyang-dan! Light my pipe for me.'

She took the pipe and puffed at it, sighing. When Mong-nyong saw her devotion, he said to himself: 'I thought my success was due to my ancestors, but now I realize it was due to my mother-in-law.'

Then he said aloud: 'Is there anybody in?'

'Who is it?'

'Me.'

'Who do you mean, "me"?''

He went inside: 'It is Yi.'

'Oh, young Yi! I see—the ward officer's son.'

'Oh, mother! Don't you know me? You're getting old—don't you know me?'

'But who are you?'

'A son-in-law is a perpetual visitor, they say. Do you still not know me?'

Wolmae was delighted: 'My dear, my dear! What has happened? Where have you been? How have you come now? Have you been blown here by some great wind? Have you been carried on the clouds? Have you heard about Ch'un-hyang? Have you come to save her? Come in, come in quickly.'

She took him by the hand and led him inside. They sat down in the candlelight, and she looked at him closely, amazed to see that he looked like a beggar among beggars. She exclaimed: 'What on earth has happened?'

'When a gentleman's fortunes change, the results are beyond description. I went up to Seoul, but lost all hope of advancement. The family fortune vanished, my father is teaching in a little school and my mother has gone back to her parents. We are all scattered, so I came to see Ch'un-hyang in the hope of getting a little money, but it looks as though both our families are ruined.'

Ch'un-hyang's mother was astonished when she heard this tale: 'You heartless man! After you left here you sent no news at all. What sort of manners are those? You were going to do so well in the examinations, and now see what's become of you! Your bolt is shot, you are like water poured out. I don't know who to blame. But what will become of Ch'un-hyang?'

She leapt forward in a fury, bit his nose, and beat him.

'Is it my fault or my nose's fault? You can send me away. Heaven is heartless, and storms and thunder will always come.'

She was sarcastic: 'When a gentleman gets into trouble, he can always make light of it.'

Mong-nyong, deliberately trying to find out how she would react, said: 'I'm very hungry. Give me a bowl of rice, please.'

The woman answered: 'There isn't any rice.'

Of course there was rice in the house, but she was very angry with him. Just then Hyang-dan returned from the jail. She heard her mistress shouting and rushed in without ceremony. She recognized Mong-nyong immediately, and greeted him profusely: 'I am so glad to see you back! Is your father well? How is your mother? You must be tired after your journey.'

'Hello! You have been having a hard time.'

'I am all right. Madam, please stop scolding him. He's come all this way to see us. You can't treat him like that. If Ch'un-hyang hears about it, she will be terribly upset. Don't be so hard on him.'

She went into the kitchen and put some green peppers and kimchi and soy sauce with a little cold rice and a bowl of cold water on a table and brought it to him: 'Eat this first, while I cook supper.'

Mong-nyong said gratefully: 'O rice, it's a long time since I saw you!'

He mixed all the food together and, ignoring the spoon, ate it with his fingers. The food disappeared as quickly as a crab draws its

eyes in from the wind.

Ch'un-hyang's mother said: 'Yes, indeed! He's obviously learned to eat like a beggar.'

Meanwhile, Hyang-dan was thinking about Ch'un-hyang's troubles. She could not cry aloud, but wept quietly to herself: 'What can we do, what can we do? How can we save my lovely mistress? What shall we do? What shall we do?'

Mong-nyong saw her silently crying and said: 'Don't cry, Hyang-dan. It's hardly likely that your mistress will die. Anyone as good as her is sure to be all right in the end.'

'Ch'un-hyang's mother heard him: 'You're still the proud aristocrat. Why do you carry on like that?'

Hyang-dan said: 'Don't take any notice of what she says; she is old and her mind is feeble. Now all this has happened to us, and she gets so angry that she never speaks without raging. Please eat some supper now.'

Mong-nyong took the table of food. Suddenly he was overcome with anger and could not face eating: 'Hyang-dan, take the table away.'

Knocking the ash out of his pipe, he said: 'Mother, shall we go and see Ch'un-hyang now?'

'Yes, of course. What sort of man would you be if you didn't go to see her?'

Hyang-dan said: 'The gates are closed now. Let's wait until curfew rings.'

At last they heard the curfew sounding. Hyang-dan carried a tray of gruel on her head and held the lantern. Mong-nyong followed behind. When they arrived at the gate of the jail there was no one about. All was quiet; not even the jailer could be found.

Ch'un-hyang, either dreaming or day-dreaming, thought she saw her husband coming. He had a gilded cap on his head, and wore a red court robe. They fell upon each other's necks and began to talk of their love for each other. . . .

'Ch'un-hyang!'

She did not answer. Mong-nyong said: 'Try calling louder!'

'We can't do that: the garrison is nearby, and if we call too loudly the governor may hear about it and start investigating. We must wait a little.'

'What do you mean? What sort of investigating? Wait while I call: Ch'un-hyang!'

Ch'un-hyang heard him calling. She was startled: 'Is that voice real, or am I dreaming? It's a strange voice.'

Mong-nyong grew agitated: 'Tell her I've come.'

'If she hears you are here, she may faint from shock. Keep quiet.' Ch'un-hyang heard her mother's voice. She was surprised: 'Mother, why have you come? If you wander about after your daughter, you will fall over and hurt yourself. Please stop coming.'

'Don't worry about me. He's come.'

'Who's come?'

'He's come.'

'I can't stand it. Tell me what you're talking about. I just had a dream that I met my husband and talked to him. Have you heard from him? Is there some news? Has he been gazetted? Tell me quickly!'

'Whether it's your husband or somebody else's, some beggar has come here.'

'What are you talking about? Has my husband come? I was dreaming of him. Has he really come?'

She grasped his hand between the bars. She could hardly believe it was true. 'Who are you, really? It must be a dream. After all this time, have you come like this? I can't take any more, I shall die. Why were you so heartless? Mother and I are ill-fated. Since you left I have passed the days and nights, waking and sleeping, thinking of you. I have been beaten till I was almost dead. Look at me now: have you come to save me?'

She was so glad to see him that she talked at length, but when she looked at him closely, how could she fail to grieve afresh? 'I don't care whether I live or die, but what has happened to you?'

'Ch'un-hyang, don't grieve. Man's fate is decided in heaven. I am sure you will not die.'

Ch'un-hyang spoke to her mother: 'When he was in Seoul, I longed for him as people long for rain after seven years' drought: did he also long for me? People don't knock down their own pagoda or trample on their own saplings. I am beyond help now.'

'Mother, when I am dead, let there be no regrets. The silk coat I used to wear is in the inlaid wardrobe: take it out and exchange it for the best rammie cloth and make him a decent set of clothes. Sell my best white silk skirt and buy him a hat and head-band, and some shoes. You will find my silver hairpin, my amber-handled knife and my jade ring in my jewel-box. Sell them too and make him clothes of hemp. I shall die soon, so I don't need these things any more. Sell the wardrobes and the cedar chest for what you can get and use the money to buy him proper food. When I am dead, look after him as though I were still alive with him.'

Then she turned to Mong-nyong: 'Tomorrow is the governor's birthday. If he gets drunk, he will probably send for me. I am already so badly beaten that I shall hardly be able to stand. My head is dizzy and I shall stumble if I try to walk. I shall die of my tortures. Pick up my body like a bearer's load, and take it to the quiet Lotus Cottage where we spent our first night together. Lay me out with your own hands and comfort my soul. Don't remove my clothes, but bury me as I am in a sunny place. Then later, when you have achieved high office, come back and re-bury me in a fine linen shroud; have me carried in a decorated bier away from these hills and up to Seoul, so that I can be buried near your ancestral graves. On my gravestone simply write the eight characters: *Grave of Ch'un-hyang, A Constant Wife, Unjustly Killed*. That will be enough for me. The sun that sets behind the western hills will rise again tomorrow, but poor Ch'un-hyang, once she has gone, will never come again. Requite my wrongs! Oh, the pity of it! My poor mother will lose me and all her belongings. She will become a beggar, asking for food from house to house, sleeping here and there out of doors. When her strength fails and she dies in some corner of the hills, the jackdaws will come from Chiri-san, flapping their wings and cawing as they peck out her eyes, and she will have no daughter to stand by and scare them away.'

She wept bitterly. Mong-nyong spoke to her: 'Don't weep. Even though the sky should fall, there will be a hole to creep into. What do you think of me, that you should be so despairing?'

They left her and went to her house. Ch'un-hyang, having seen her husband so unexpectedly in the darkness, was now left alone lamenting: 'When God created men, he made them all equal. What sin has brought my misfortune on me? I lost my husband at sixteen and lived in lonely misery; I was tortured and beaten, and brought to jail. Now for three or four months, day and night, I have waited for him to come back. At last I have seen his face again, but it has increased my sorrow. When I die and go to the Yellow Springs, what shall I be able to say to the kings who sit in judgment there?'

She wept bitterly, exhausting her strength, more dead than alive.

Yi Mong-nyong came out of Ch'un-hyang's house intending to spend the night in spying out the situation in the city. He went to the yamen and heard the chief clerk saying to one of the despatch-carriers: 'I have

heard that Yi, who lives outside the West Gate of Seoul, has been appointed an Inspector, and a few minutes ago a suspicious character in ragged clothes and a battered hat was seen with Ch'un-hyang's mother, carrying a lighted lantern. Tomorrow at the governor's birthday banquet we must have a special place prepared in case he comes. Make absolutely sure that nothing goes wrong.'

When Mong-nyong heard this he thought to himself: 'So they have guessed what's going on.'

Then he went on to the courts of justice. See what the commandant of the soldiers was doing; he was speaking to the guards: 'Just now there was a strange beggar hanging about near the jail. He may have been a secret inspector. Make a careful record of what he looked like.'

Mong-nyong said to himself: 'These devils know everything.'

He went on to the Office of Supply, where he heard the same sort of thing. After he had visited all six offices of the yamen he returned to Ch'un-hyang's house.

The next day, after morning muster in the yamen, the officials from the nearby towns began to come in: the commandant of Unbong and the magistrates from Kurye, Koksong, Sunchang, Okkwa, Chinan and Changsu each arrived in turn. The military and civil officials were lined up on either side and the governor sat in the middle as host. He called an underling and said: 'Tell the butler to send in the refreshments. Tell the butcher to kill a big ox, and the secretary of the Office of Rites to send the band; and get a servant to hang out the big canopy. See that the guards keep uninvited people out.'

It was an animated scene. Flags and banners were waving, the air was full of the sound of music, and the kisaeng in their brightly-colored dresses danced before him, their white hands and billowing gauze skirts moving to the rhythm of the music:

Chi-ya-ja, tung-dong-sil!

The sound was deafening and Yi Mong-nyong was dazed by it all.

'Guard! Go and tell your officer that I am a beggar who has come a long way for this fine banquet. Ask him to give me some tit-bits! See what the guard does.'

'I don't care who you are, the captain says no beggars are to be admitted. There's no point in asking.' He pushed Mong-nyong away; obviously he was hoping for promotion. The commandant from Unbong saw what was happening and said to the governor: 'That beggar looks shabby enough, but he has a gentlemanly air. What about giving him a place at the bottom there and letting him have a cup of wine?'

The governor said: 'Do as you like, but....'

The 'but...' sounded reluctant. Mong-nyong thought: 'Ah! you think I may steal something, but it is you who will be caught today.'

The commandant ordered the guard: 'Let that man come in.'

Mong-nyong came in and sat down quietly. He looked around him and saw all the local magistrates sitting there with tables of wine and dainties in front of them. While they were performing the music of *Chinyang-jo*, he looked at the table that had been put in front of him, and how could he but be angry? It was a broken little table with coarse wooden chopsticks; on it were plain boiled bean-sprouts, pickled radish, and a bowl of cloudy rice-beer. He kicked the table over and pointed to the commandant's dish of beef-ribs: 'I should like one of those ribs.'

'Help yourself,' said the commandant, and then went on: 'On an occasion like this, music alone is not enough; we should have a verse competition. How if we were to compose a verse of poetry each?'

'A good idea!'

The commandant set the rhyme-words: *ko*, meaning 'louder', and *ko* meaning 'flesh'; and they began to compose their poems. Mong-nyong said: 'I studied a book of model verses when I was a boy; now I have come to a fine banquet and enjoyed the food, I can hardly depart without thanks. Let me try my hand at a verse.'

The commandant was delighted to hear this, and had a brush and inkstone brought. Mong-nyong composed two couplets such as the rest of them could not match. He wrote about the people's feelings and the governor's style of administration:

Fine wine in golden cups is the common people's blood,

Vicious on jade dishes are the common people's flesh;

When the grease of the candles drips, the people's tears are falling,

The noise of the music is loud, but the people's cries are louder.

The governor was puzzled over the meaning of the verses, but when the commandant saw them, he thought to himself: 'There's trouble brewing here!'

Mong-nyong left, and the commandant called the chief secretaries and said to them: 'Be ready for trouble.'

He called the officer of works to check the buildings, the commander to check the post-horses, the steward to check the catering, the jailer to check the prisoners, the executioner to check his equipment, the secretaries to check the documents and the captain to check the duty roster. When he returned after all this activity, the governor, who had noticed nothing out of the way, asked him: 'Where have you been?'

'I went to relieve myself.'

The governor commanded: 'Bring Ch'un-hyang here quickly! He was getting drunk.'

Meanwhile Mong-nyong was collecting his troop. He made a sign to his scribes. See how the scribes and agents respond: they organized the post-horsemen, walking up and down between them. The men were wearing plain headbands and kerchiefs with new felt hats pressed well down, long puttees and new straw shoes. They had clean new hempen suits, and heavy cudgels hung from their wrists by loops of deerskin. Hither and thither they moved, swarming the streets of Namwŏn. See what the Ch'ŏng'a post-men do: lifting high the round brass warrant, shining like a golden sun, they shouted: 'The royal inspector comes!'

The mountains shook with the sound, and heaven and earth quivered. Trees and grasses, birds and beasts, all were afraid. At the South Gate, they said: 'He's coming!'; at the North Gate, they said: 'He's coming!'; at the East and West Gates, they cried: 'He's coming!' till the blue sky reverberated with the noise.

'Summon the chief secretaries!' came the call, and the whole yamen was terrified. Whips were cracking.

'I am ruined!'

'The officer of works!'

The officer of works heard the call and came in: 'I was only doing what I was told. I daredn't disobey.'

The whips cracked.

'I am being torn to pieces!'

The lieutenants and the deputies went pale, the head clerk and the chief secretary were scared out of their wits. All the soldiers rushed about busily. The local magistrates took flight. See what they do: dropping their seal-boxes, grabbing the fruit, dropping their diplomas and grabbing rice-cakes, losing their caps and putting on baskets, losing their hats and putting on dishes, losing their scabbards and wetting themselves in fright. Lutes were broken and drums were smashed; the governor, fouling his trousers, ran into the yamen office like a mouse hiding in a roll of straw matting: 'It's cold! The door's coming in! Shut the wind!... The water's dry—give me my throat!'

The butler dropped the tray and ran in with half a door on his head, the Inspector's soldiers close behind him.

'Save me! This is the end!'

Then Mong-nyong gave orders to his men: 'This town was once my father's responsibility. There must be no disorder. Withdraw to the guest-house.'

When he had set himself up in the yamen, he said: 'Remove the governor from office and suspend the administration.' He posted a board on each of the four great gates, saying: 'The governor's administration is suspended.'

Then he called the keeper of the jail: 'Bring out all your prisoners.' When the prisoners were brought, he investigated their offences and released those who were innocent.

'What has this girl done?'

The jailer said: 'She's the daughter of the kisaeng Wŏlmae. She was jailed for creating a disturbance in the yamen.'

'What did she do?'

The jailer replied: 'The governor summoned her to serve in his household but she said that chastity and constancy prevented her, and she created a fuss in his presence. She is Ch'un-hyang.'

The inspector said: 'Do you think that a person like you can create a disturbance in the yamen on the pretence of being faithful, and hope to live? You deserve to die. Will you refuse to enter my service?'

Ch'un-hyang was in despair: 'All you officers who come here are the same. I beg you to listen to me. Can the winds wear away the high rocks of a mountain cliff? Can the snow change the greenness of the pine and bamboo? Do not ask me to do such a thing. Have me killed quickly.'

Then she turned to Hyang-dan: 'Hyang-dan, go and look for my husband. When he came to the jail last night he made me hope for deliverance. I wonder where he has gone; he cannot know that I am about to die.'

The inspector ordered her: 'Raise your eyes. Look at me.'

Ch'un-hyang lifted her head and looked up to the dais. There was no question that it was her husband, who had come as a beggar, sitting up there now as judge. Half laughing and half crying she said:

Wonderful, marvellous!

My husband is the royal inspector.

Autumn had come to the town of Namwŏn,

And now it is passing away.

Spring has come to the guest-house,

Plum-blossom and spring breezes have brought me to life.

Is it a dream or is it true?

I am afraid I shall wake up.

While she was rejoicing in this fashion her mother came in. What can express her happiness? Ch'un-hyang's virtues now shone resplendent, and who would not be happy?

When Yi Mong-nyong had finished his work in Namwŏn, he sent Ch'un-hyang and her mother and Hyang-dan to Seoul. Their cavalcade was splendid, and everyone who saw it praised them. When Ch'un-hyang left Namwŏn, although she was going to a life of honors, she could not help feeling sad at leaving her old home:

Goodbye, Lotus Cottage,

Where first we loved and slept,

Kwanghwal-lu and Maggie Bridge,

Goodbye, Yongju-gak!

The grass of spring grows green each year,

But the sons of men cannot return.

That is true for me:

Everyone has his own farewells.

And I bid you stay in peace—

I know not when I'll come again.

Mong-nyong finished his inspection of both parts of the province and learned the true state of the people. Then he went up to Seoul and presented himself to the king. His reports were submitted to the boards of the central government, and when they had been reviewed the king praised him highly. He was immediately raised to be a member of the Board of Civil Affairs, and rector of the national Confucian college. Ch'un-hyang was officially recognized as a woman of great constancy. They thanked his Majesty and retired to their home, where they reported the royal awards to Mong-nyong's parents and offered their congratulations. Later on Mong-nyong passed through high office in the Boards of Civil Affairs and Revenue, and through deputy ministries till he became Prime Minister, and after his retirement lived to a happy old age with his faithful wife. She bore him three sons and two daughters, who were more brilliant than their father and whose descendants were raised to the first rank of nobility for generation after generation.

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