

## 孔雀东南飞

佚名

## The Peacocks Fly to the Southeast

Anonymous

汉末建安中，庐江府  
小吏焦仲卿妻刘氏，为仲  
卿母所遣，自誓不嫁。其  
家逼之，乃投水而死。仲  
卿闻之，亦自缢于庭树。  
时人伤之，为诗云尔。

During the reign title of Jian'an close to the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty,  
Lady Liu Lanzhi, wife of Jiao Zhongqing, who was a petty official in Lujiang  
Prefecture, was banished back to her family by Zhongqing's mother, and she  
vowed never to marry again. However, her family kept pressing her to remarry,  
so she had to drown herself. When Jiao Zhongqing heard of his wife's death, he  
hanged himself from a tree in his own courtyard. People of that time mourned  
for them and wrote a poem as follows.

孔雀东南飞，  
五里一徘徊。  
“十三能织素，  
十四学裁衣。  
十五弹箜篌，  
十六诵诗书。  
十七为君妇，  
心中常苦悲。  
君既为府吏，  
守节情不移。  
贱妾留空房，  
相见常日稀。  
鸡鸣入机织，  
夜夜不得息。  
三日断五匹，  
大人故嫌迟。  
非为织作迟，  
君家妇难为！  
妾不堪驱使，  
徒留无所施。  
便可白公姥，  
及时相遣归。”

The peacocks fly to the southeast,  
Lingering every mile and a half at least.  
"At thirteen I could weave white silk,  
And at fourteen I learned to make clothes.  
At fifteen I was able to play the Konghou,  
And at sixteen I could recite poetry and prose.  
When I was seventeen, I became your wife,  
Yet I was always full of pains and sorrows.  
Since you are an official of the government,  
You must perform your duties with concentration.  
Therefore I was left alone in the empty boudoir,  
And the time we saw each other were thinning out.  
I started to weave cloth when the cock crowed at dawn,  
And could not have a respite every night.  
I could weave five bolts of cloth within three days,  
But mother-in-law still judged me slow in weaving.  
Not that I am slack and slow to weave,  
But that my parents-in-law are hard to serve!  
I'm tired of being driven by your family,  
And it's no use my staying here vainly.  
Tell your parents about my sufferings,  
And ask them to send me back in no time."

府吏得闻之，  
堂上启阿母：  
“儿已薄禄相，  
幸复得此妇。  
结发同枕席，  
黄泉共为友。  
共事二三年，  
始尔未为久。  
女行无偏斜，  
何意致不厚。”  
阿母谓府吏：  
“何乃太区区！  
此妇无礼节，  
举动自专由。  
吾意久怀忿，  
汝岂得自由！  
东家有贤女，  
自名秦罗敷。  
可怜体无比，  
阿母为汝求。  
便可速遣之，  
遣去慎莫留！”  
府吏长跪告：  
“伏惟启阿母。  
今若遣此妇，  
终老不复娶！”  
阿母得闻之，  
槌床便大怒：  
“小子无所畏，  
何敢助妇语！  
吾已失恩义，  
会不相从许！”  
府吏默无声，  
再拜还入户。

Having heard these complaints,  
The official went to tell his mother in the hall:  
"I have no blessing to enjoy great wealth,  
But I'm lucky to have such a good wife.  
After marriage we've become a loving couple,  
And hope we'll keep together even in the netherworld.  
It's two or three years since we got together;  
It hasn't been long as it's still at the beginning.  
There has been nothing improper in her conduct, yet  
Who knows why she has incurred your discontent."  
Mother said to the poor petty official:  
"How can you be so deplorably ignorant!  
This woman has no sense of etiquette,  
And she behaves with such wanton freedom.  
I have already been filled with so much anger;  
How can you take it upon yourself to indulge her!  
Our east neighbor has a beautiful girl;  
Qin Luofu is her endearing and charming name.  
No one can compare with her for graceful figure.  
I will plead for your marriage with this girl.  
You should banish Lanzhi home at once,  
And never let her stay here any longer!"  
The official knelt down to unfeignedly beseech:  
"I venture to tell dear mother,  
If you send my wife away now,  
I will never take anyone else as a spouse! "  
Having heard what her son said,  
Mother lost her temper banging the bed:  
"You're too bold to be afraid of anything,  
How dare you talk nonsense for this woman!  
I have cut off all affection for her  
And will never grant your request! "  
The official remained silent, and  
After bowing again he returned to his bedroom.

举言谓新妇，  
哽咽不能语：  
“我自不驱卿，  
逼迫有阿母。  
卿但暂还家，  
吾今且报府。  
不久当归还，  
还必相迎取。  
以此下心意，  
慎勿违吾语。”  
新妇谓府吏：  
“勿复重纷纭。  
往昔初阳岁，  
谢家来贵门。  
奉事循公姥，  
进止敢自专？  
昼夜勤作息，  
伶俜萦苦辛。  
谓言无罪过，  
供养卒大恩；  
仍更被驱遣，  
何言复来还！  
妾有绣腰襦，  
葳蕤自生光；  
红罗复斗帐，  
四角垂香囊；  
箱帘六七十，  
绿碧青丝绳，  
物物各自异，  
种种在其中。  
人贱物亦鄙，  
不足迎后人，  
留待作遗施，  
于今无会因。

He tried to speak to his wife but,  
Choking with sobs, he could hardly utter a word.  
"I myself don't mean to drive you away,  
But mother unreasonably compels me.  
You only need to stay with your mother for some time,  
And now I have to return to the prefectural office.  
It won't be long before I come back home;  
When I return I shall certainly come to take you back.  
Please just humble yourself for the time being,  
And don't you ever go against what I say"  
Lanzhi spoke frankly to the petty official:  
"You needn't bother to tell me time and again.  
I still vividly remember that sunny day,  
When I left my mother's house and went to yours.  
I have always served the parents in-law as they please;  
How have I ever dared to act on my own?  
I have been diligently doing housework day and night,  
Lonely and bitterly tangled with endless pains.  
I think I have been innocent all along,  
And ready to repay the kindness of parents-in-law.  
Nevertheless I'm still about to be evicted, and  
How can you talk about my returning to your house!  
I have a short embroidered dress  
With a glorious pattern of embroidery,  
And a small mosquito net of red silk,  
Hung with perfume sachets from its four corners.  
I have also over five dozen cases of different size,  
All carefully tied with green silk strings,  
And containing items of various kinds,  
Which are necessities of everyday life.  
They are humble articles as their owner is so humble,  
Not worth using by the future one you are to wed.  
But you can keep and donate them to someone else,  
Now there's no way for us to see each other again.

时时为安慰，  
久久莫相忘！”  
鸡鸣外欲曙，  
新妇起严妆。  
著我绣夹裙，  
事事四五通。  
足下蹑丝履，  
头上玳瑁光。  
腰若流纨素，  
耳著明月珰。  
指如削葱根，  
口如含朱丹。  
纤纤作细步，  
精妙世无双。  
上堂拜阿母，  
阿母怒不止。  
“昔作女儿时，  
生小出野里。  
本自无教训，  
兼愧贵家子。  
受母钱帛多，  
不堪母驱使。  
今日还家去，  
念母劳家里。”  
却与小姑别，  
泪落连珠子。  
“新妇初来时，  
小姑始扶床；  
今日被驱遣，  
小姑如我长。  
勤心养公姥，  
好自相扶将。  
初七及下九，  
嬉戏莫相忘。”

I hope you'll always comfort yourself, by  
Remembering me long, as well as our short wedlock!"  
When the cocks crowed outside at dawn,  
Lanzhi got up and carefully dressed herself.  
She wore the embroidered lined skirt,  
And did everything four or five times making herself up.  
She wore a pair of silk shoes on both her feet;  
Tortoiseshell hairpins glistened on her head.  
Around her waist was a band of white silk;  
Her ears clanked with earrings of moon beads.  
Her tender fingers were as white as scallion roots;  
Her lips were red as if with cinnabar in the mouth.  
She walked softly in small steps,  
With a graceful manner unique in the world.  
She went up to mother-in-law in the hall to bid farewell;  
Bearing grudge the latter didn't try to stop her at all.  
"When I was a daughter before marriage,  
I grew up in the countryside that was wild.  
I was not strictly disciplined to begin with, and  
More ashamed was to marry the son of a rich family.  
I was given much dowry money from mother-in-law,  
But I was not up to the tasks she assigned me.  
Today I'm going back to my mother's,  
Still worrying about your toiling at home in future."  
She then went to say goodbye to her sister-in-law,  
With tears rolling down like a string of beads.  
"When I came here as a newlywed bride,  
Sister-in-law was only a toddler walking by the bed.  
When I am banished to my mother's house today,  
Sister-in-law has grown as tall as I am.  
I hope you'll help my parents in-law as best you can,  
And serve them with filial piety in their later years.  
On the annual July 7th and the monthly lower 9th,  
Don't forget me when you are gaily frolicking."

出门登车去，  
涕落百余行。  
府吏马在前，  
新妇车在后。  
隐隐何甸甸，  
俱会大道口。  
下马入车中，  
低头共耳语：  
“誓不相隔卿，  
且暂还家去。  
吾今且赴府，  
不久当还归。  
誓天不相负！”  
新妇谓府吏：  
“感君区区怀！  
君既若见录，  
不久望君来。  
君当作磐石，  
妾当作蒲苇。  
蒲苇纫如丝，  
磐石无转移。  
我有亲父兄，  
性行暴如雷，  
恐不任我意，  
逆以煎我怀。”  
举手长劳劳，  
二情同依依。  
入门上家堂，  
进退无颜仪。  
阿母大拊掌，  
不图子自归：  
“十三教汝织，  
十四能裁衣，  
十五弹箜篌，  
She left the house and got into the carriage,  
With a hundred lines of tears falling down.  
The petty official rode on horse in front,  
And Lanzhi's carriage moved behind.  
The carriage incessantly rumbled low and loud;  
The couple reached the wide road at the painful moment.  
The official dismounted and climbed into the carriage,  
Bowing his head and whispering to Lanzhi his wife:  
"I swear I'll never sever thee;  
Please just stay with your mother's for the time being.  
Today I'll go to the prefectural office for business,  
But I'll certainly come back soon in a short time.  
I swear to God I'll never fail you!"  
Lanzhi the newly-wed wife said to the official:  
"Thank you for your sincerity and deep concern!  
If you are so kind as to remember me,  
I'll be eagerly looking forward to your coming soon.  
You as my lord shall be like a bedrock,  
And I your wife shall be like pampasgrass.  
Pampasgrass is silkily soft but strongly tenacious,  
While the bedrock is firm and immovable.  
Only I have an elder brother,  
Who is bad tempered and often flies into a rage.  
I'm afraid I can't just do what I want;  
He'll go against my will and torment my heart."  
They raised their hands to bid farewell,  
And both felt reluctant and sorrowful.  
Back home, Lanzhi walked into the hall,  
Hesitating and feeling very ashamed.  
Mother clapped her hands in great surprise, saying:  
"I didn't expect you to return without our picking you up.  
I taught you to spin when you were thirteen,  
And at fourteen you were able to make clothes,  
At fifteen you could play the Konghou,

十六知礼仪，  
十七遣汝嫁，  
谓言无誓违。  
汝今何罪过，  
不迎而自归？”  
兰芝惭阿母：  
“儿实无罪过。”  
阿母大悲摧。  
还家十余日，  
县令遣媒来。  
云有第三郎，  
窈窕世无双。  
年始十八九，  
便言多令才。  
阿母谓阿女：  
“汝可去应之。”  
阿女含泪答：  
“兰芝初还时，  
府吏见丁宁，  
结誓不别离。  
今日违情义，  
恐此事非奇。  
自可断来信，  
徐徐更谓之。”  
阿母白媒人：  
“贫贱有此女，  
始适还家门。  
不堪吏人妇，  
岂合令郎君？  
幸可广问讯，  
不得便相许。”  
媒人去数日，  
寻遣丞请还，  
说有兰家女，

At sixteen you knew etiquette, and  
At seventeen we married you off.  
We thought you wouldn't do anything wrong there.  
Now what are you guilty of, so that  
You come home without our picking you up?"  
"I am ashamed to face my mother,  
But I haven't done anything that is wrong."  
Having heard this, Mother felt very sad.  
Ten days after her coming back home,  
The magistrate sent a matchmaker to offer a proposal.  
He had a third son that was still single,  
Who was of the best physique and handsome,  
And was just eighteen or nineteen years old,  
As well as being talented and good at literature.  
Mother said to her daughter:  
"You may as well accept the marriage proposal."  
With tears in her eyes, Lanzhi replied:  
"Before Lanzhi returned home  
My husband and I had stressed time and again  
That we would never divorce each other.  
If I break my promise today,  
This marriage will be very unlucky.  
You can turn down the matchmaker,  
Telling him we can talk about it later."  
Mother went out and said to the matchmaker:  
"Our poor family really has this daughter;  
She has been home not long after her marriage.  
As she was unworthy of being wife of a petty officer,  
How can she remarry your notably talented son?  
You had better make some more inquiries;  
Now I just can't promise you that."  
A few days after the matchmaker had left,  
An assistant official returned after being sent to the prefect.  
He had told the prefect about a lady named Lanzhi,

承籍有宦官。  
云有第五郎，  
娇逸未有婚。  
遣丞为媒人，  
主簿通语言。  
直说太守家，  
有此令郎君，  
既欲结大义，  
故遣来贵门。  
阿母谢媒人：  
“女子先有誓，  
老姥岂敢言！”  
阿兄得闻之，  
怅然心中烦。  
举言谓阿妹：  
“作计何不量！  
先嫁得府吏，  
后嫁得郎君。  
否泰如天地，  
足以荣汝身。  
不嫁义郎体，  
其往欲何云？”  
兰芝仰头答：  
“理实如兄言。  
谢家事夫婿，  
中道还兄门。  
处分适兄意，  
那得自任专！  
虽与府吏要，  
渠会永无缘。  
登即相许和，  
便可作婚姻。”  
媒人下床去。  
诺诺复尔尔。

Who was born of an official's family.  
He then told Mother that the prefect had a fifth son,  
Who was handsome, tall and yet not married.  
The prefect asked the assistant official to be a matchmaker,  
Which was conveyed to him by his secretary-general.  
The assistant official came to tell Mother in direct language:  
"As the prefect has such a handsome son,  
He wanted to have his son marry your daughter,  
That's why I am here to serve as a matchmaker."  
Lanzhi's mother turned down the matchmaker:  
"Since my daughter has vowed not to marry again,  
Being her mother, how dare I tell her anything about that? "  
When Lanzhi's brother heard of the news,  
He felt vexed and displeased.  
He spoke to Lanzhi, his younger sister:  
"Why don't you think it over before making your decision!  
You previously married a petty official, and  
Now you can marry a handsome son of a prefect.  
Good and bad fortunes are as different as heaven and earth;  
Remarriage will make your life mighty wealthy.  
If you don't marry such a fine gentleman,  
What do you intend to do then? "  
Lanzhi raised her head and answered:  
"What my brother has said is just right.  
I left home and married my husband;  
Then I returned to my brother's due to the halfway marriage.  
Therefore I intend to arrange everything as you please,  
And how can I make my own decision!  
Although I swore an oath with the petty official,  
I knew we would never have a chance of reunion.  
Now I'll accept the proposal at once,  
So I agree to this marriage, of course."  
Stepping down from the seat on bed,  
The matchmaker kept saying: Good! That's the way!

还部白府君： He returned to report the mission to the prefect:  
“下官奉使命， "I, your servant, completed the mission of Your Excellency,  
言谈大有缘。” And the marriage talk has turned out successful."  
府君得闻之， Having heard his satisfying report,  
心中大欢喜。 The prefect felt very delighted.  
视历复开书， Over and over again he scrutinized the almanac,  
便利此月内， Which said the lucky day was within this month,  
六合正相应。 And the time of their birth-dates were well matched.  
良吉三十日， "The auspicious day of wedding is fixed on the 30th.  
今已二十七， As it is already the 27th of the month,  
卿可去成婚。 You may go about the wedding at once."  
交语速装束， The servants urged each other to make haste and get ready;  
络绎如浮云。 A continuous flow of people hurried like clouds in the sky.  
青雀白鹄舫， The bridal boat was painted with bluebirds and white swans;  
四角龙子幡。 Flags embroidered with dragons hung at four boat corners  
婀娜随风转， Fluttered lightly and gaily in the gentle breeze.  
金车玉作轮。 A golden carriage was fitted with jade wheels;  
踟躕青骢马， Blue-and-white-haired horses trotted at leisurely paces;  
流苏金镂鞍。 The saddles were adorned with tassels of golden thread.  
赍钱三百万， Betrothal money of three million was generously offered;  
皆用青丝穿。 All the coins were threaded in bunches with green strings,  
杂彩三百匹， Plus three hundred bolts of silk and satin of all colors, and  
交广市鲑珍。 Aquatic and mountain treasures from the South of the country.  
从人四五百， Four or five hundred attendants came to the prefect's mansion,  
郁郁登郡门。 Active with excitement to fetch the bride to the wedding.  
阿母谓阿女： Mother urged Lanzhi the would-be bride, saying:  
“适得府君书， "I have just received a letter from the prefect,  
明日来迎汝。 Telling me they are coming to greet you tomorrow.  
何不作衣裳？ Why don't you get your bridal garments ready?  
莫令事不举！” You'd better not let things down!"  
阿女默无声， Lanzhi said nothing in silence,  
手巾掩口啼， Sobbing with a handkerchief over her mouth,  
泪落便如泻。 Her tears were rolling down her face in torrents.  
移我琉璃榻， Moving a couch of colored glaze,



出置前窗下。 She put it under the front window outside.  
左手持刀尺， With scissors and a ruler in her left hand,  
右手执绫罗。 She held silk and satin in her right.  
朝成绣夹裙， In the morning she made an embroidered lined skirt;  
晚成单罗衫。 By the evening, she had completed a single layer garment.  
晡晡日欲暝， When it was getting dark at dusk;  
愁思出门啼。 She wept sorrowfully thinking of her wedding the next day.  
府吏闻此变， Having heard of these unexpected changes,  
因求假暂归。 The petty official asked for leave of a few days.  
未至二三里， When it was about two miles away from the Liu's,  
摧藏马悲哀。 He began to feel saddened, the horses sadly neighing.  
新妇识马声， Long familiar with the neighs of the horse so well,  
蹑履相逢迎。 Lanzhi hurried quietly out of the house to meet the man.  
怅然遥相望， Looking into the distance with a melancholic heart,  
知是故人来。 She clearly knew her ex-husband was coming.  
举手拍马鞍， She raised her hand and patted the horse on the saddle;  
嗟叹使心伤： Her constant sighing saddened both of them:  
“自君别我后， "Ever since you my lord left me,  
人事不可量。 Unpredictable changes have taken place.  
果不如先愿， Sure enough, our previous wishes can't be granted,  
又非君所详。 And you do not know the ins and outs of it all.  
我有亲父母， I have both biological parents  
逼迫兼弟兄。 Plus my elder brother, who kept pressing me  
以我应他人， Into marriage with some other young man.  
君还何所望！ ” As it is, what hope do you have now!"  
府吏谓新妇： The petty official said to Lanzhi:  
“贺卿得高迁！ "Congratulations on your attaining a higher status!  
磐石方且厚， The bedrock is square and thick;  
可以卒千年； It can last for a thousand years.  
蒲苇一时纫， Pampasgrass is tenacious for a while  
便作旦夕间。 But it cannot hold on for a long time.  
卿当日胜贵， Day by day you will live a more comfortable life,  
吾独向黄泉！ ” But I'll go down to the netherworld all alone."  
新妇谓府吏： Lanzhi said to the petty official in reply:

“何意出此言！  
同是被逼迫，  
君尔妾亦然。  
黄泉下相见，  
勿违今日言！”  
执手分道去，  
各各还家门。  
生人作死别，  
恨恨那可论？  
念与世间辞，  
千万不复全！  
府吏还家去，  
上堂拜阿母：  
“今日大风寒，  
寒风摧树木，  
严霜结庭兰。  
儿今日冥冥，  
令母在后单。  
故作不良计，  
勿复怨鬼神！  
命如南山石，  
四体康且直！”  
阿母得闻之，  
零泪应声落：  
“汝是大家子，  
仕宦于台阁。  
慎勿为妇死，  
贵贱情何薄！  
东家有贤女，  
窈窕艳城郭，  
阿母为汝求，  
便复在旦夕。”  
府吏再拜还，  
长叹空房中，

"Why should you have said such a thing!  
Both of us have been willfully forced,  
This is why you suffer, and so is it for me.  
We shall meet again in the netherworld;  
Let's not break our vows made today!"  
They held hands and then parted ways,  
Each returning to their own respective homes.  
As the living ones had to do the death parting,  
How could they stop feeling bitter about their fate?  
They all wanted to die together at once,  
In no circumstance would they live any longer!  
The moment the petty official arrived home,  
He knelt down and said to Mother in the all:  
"It's windy and cold today;  
Cold wind has broken our trees, and  
Heavy frost has spoiled the orchids in the yard.  
I will meet the end of my life,  
Leaving my mother alone in this world.  
I deliberately made this plan for myself;  
Please don't hate ghosts and gods for the consequence!  
May you live as long as the South Mountain rock,  
And wish you strong and healthy as always!"  
Having heard these parting words,  
Mother shed tears in torrents all at once."  
"You're the son of a big family,  
Performing an official service in the prefecture.  
Never shall you die for an unworthy woman;  
It's not a shame at all that you have jilted her!  
Our east neighbor has got a nice young girl;  
She is the best one in the whole city, slim and beautiful.  
Mother will go and propose marriage for you,  
And the reply will come soon just today."  
The petty official kowtowed again and left;  
Heaving a lot of long sighs in his empty bedroom,

作计乃尔立。 He made up his mind there and then.  
转头向户里, Looking inside the house in sadness,  
渐见愁煎迫。 His sorrow grew more intense in his heart.  
其日牛马嘶, On the wedding day, horses neighed and cattle mooed,  
新妇入青庐。 The bride was ushered into a blue tent.  
奄奄黄昏后, It was growing dark at dusk,  
寂寂人定初。 All was quiet with nobody around.  
“我命绝今日, "The end of my life has come today,  
魂去尸长留! " My soul will leave, only with my body left! "  
揽裙脱丝履, She pulled up her skirt, took off her silk shoes,  
举身赴清池。 And plunged herself into the clear pool.  
府吏闻此事, When the petty official heard of the news,  
心知长别离。 He knew it was the parting once and for all.  
徘徊庭树下, Having lingered under the the yard tree a little while,  
自挂东南枝。 He hanged himself from a tree in the southeast corner.  
两家求合葬, The two families requested for their combined interment,  
合葬华山傍。 So both were buried together beside the Huashan Mount.  
东西植松柏, Pines and cypresses were planted east and west of their tomb,  
左右种梧桐。 Which was flanked by parasol trees on the left and right.  
枝枝相覆盖, Branches of all sizes overlapped one another,  
叶叶相交通。 And leaves touched leaves gently in the breeze.  
中有双飞鸟, A pair of birds flew amid the trees  
自名为鸳鸯。 The name of both was called Yuanyang the love bird.  
仰头相向鸣, They lifted their heads and chirped face to face,  
夜夜达五更。 And every night they kept chirping till the fifth watch.  
行人驻足听, Passers-by stopped to listen with empathy;  
寡妇起彷徨。 Startled widows felt more restless and upset.  
多谢后世人, I'd like to caution the later generations  
戒之慎勿忘。 That this story should be taken as a lesson unforgotten.

Translated by Jin Deming