**"A Young Man"** —A folk piece from the Pre-Qin Period (before 221 BCE) of China

A young man who looked very honest came to me with his cloth to exchange for silk. But instead of exchanging for silk, his real purpose was to seek for a marriage with me. As a girl at the designated age for love, I did not resist his rhetorics and fell in love with him. At the time of our parting, I accompanied him across the river of Qi, all way to the town of Dunqiu, unwilling to go back. When he doubted if I really loved him, I replied with eagerness: "Do you think I'm intentionally delaying our marriage? Why shall I do like that! I love you so much! I'm just worrying that you don't have a go-between to manage our marriage. That would seem very inappropriate to my family and neighbors. I believe you won't get angry with me, right? By the Autumn, I promise, I will be your wife!"

Finally it was the day when we had agreed on to meet again, which I had always waited desperately for. I ascended to a pile of collapsed wall to look out to where he lived. Not seeing him coming out from the buildings, I filled my eyes with tears; Seeing him rapidly running toward me, I went out of mind with love and joy. I took his arms and murmured: "Would you perform some divination for ourselves? If there isn't any sinister omen, then just drive your carriage here and take me away - along with my dowry!"

My love resembled the flowers. In the months when flowers still show no signs of withering, the leaves around them all grow fresh and lush. But O, to the colorful butterflies: Never be seduced to take any sip of the nictar! And O, to my dear fellow ladies: Never be seduced to throw yourselves into love with men! When a man falls in love, there would still exist a great chance for him to get out; But for a lady there wouldn't!

Then, as you could imagine, my love walked to the end - resembling the flowers. When the months of flowers' withering finally came, they lose their original color, and fall down from the branches one by one. Why would that happen? Since I became his sweetheart baby and settled down in his family, poverty has never been tired of torturing me. Sarcastically he got tired, and abandoned me. So I mounted the carriage and went back across the river of Qi again, which was the same river as when all the stories began. It was swollen and overflowing, moistening the curtain of the carriage, just like my tears. I managed to find it out, again and again. Was it me who messed everything up? Did I do anything bad that made him treat me like that? The answer was no, and it was all the consequences of his disloyalty. Men are just as untrustworthy: They repeatedly change their minds, once each day.

Being a wife for so many years, there's not a single household chore I haven't done; I got up early in the morning and went to bed late at night, and it wasn't one day or two that I had lived like this. But the man, who already recieved everything he wanted, repaid nothing but violence to me. And my brothers at home, unaware of the real situation, all pointed at my nose and laughed at me. I tried to compose my mind and think carefully about what I had experienced, but nothing else could I do than mourning for my own destiny.

Never, ever will I accept to grow old with you: I'm already defeated by the grudge that accumulated in my heart. The rivers and swamps, though vast, have borders; but the pain of being together with a man like you is without a border. I could still remember our youth, while we were happily talking and laughing with each other, making promises that would be broken with our own hands in the future. But, of course, I shall never think about these unbearable histories with you anymore. Our everything is now ended, once and for all, and that's it!