AS WE SIT A LONG WHILE, THE WIND GROWS STRONGER – ACT 1 SCENE 1

[Dim lights on two stages. The HOME stage is ithe inside of a poor Chinese hut. There is a wood table, two chairs, cutting knives, bronze pots, a fireplace, a cupboard (part of which is locked by hemp0, a bed and cradle. The ROYAL stage is the inside of a royal chamber. There are paintings, fine animal skin trophies, silk curtains, embrdered tables, and pillows. There is a chessboard table.]

[LI HENG and YANG KUO-CHUG are first seen kneeling from the ROYAL stage, LI HENG stared out into the audience, uncertain, YANG KUO-CHUNG, who is holding a parchment and pen, stares at LI HENG from upstage.]

[WIFE is couched in a ball on the HOME stage. She covers her eyes as if in anguish, grief, perhaps, pain.]

TU FU

[Voiceover.] With unseasonal storms, the rain autumn is confused; the four Seas and the Eight Wilds share a single cloud. A hoorse going and an ox coming can no more be distinguished; How should the muddy Ching and the clear Wei be separated? The grain heads grow ears the millet panicles are black; Tet no report comes from the farrmers and peasants. In the city for a peck of rice one gives one’s bedding; Only let the bargain be made, what matter if it’s fair!

[There is the sound of wind and thunder in the background. Afteer a few moments, this sound I replacd by the sound of a baby crting. The lights brigten and WIFE scurries over to the cradle to tend to her baby.

WIFFE

No. Oh no. It’s alright. Alrigth now, Quiet, darling know your unhappy. Learnt to be happy, like me. Don’t think of emptiness. How hard da bed, how cold the room. Shh. It’s alright. There. All oe bad dream now but you;ll wake and see, life’s a happy celebration. You;ll see. You’ll grow and hunt and study. Learn of your forefathers. Stand proud as you peacock. A line of great men lived before you. Finee men who travelled all over China, all over the world. You’ll be like them one day. One day, you’ll see. Hush now. Please.

[WIFE cringes, hunber pangs. The voiceover returns. WIFE looks around as if to see where the voice coming from.]