



To the tune "Qingping Music"—"The gold wind"

清平樂 · 金風細細

Text Information

Author | Yan Shu

Language | Chinese

Period | 11th Century

Genre | Song lyric (ci)

Source | Tang, Guizhang 唐圭璋 (ed.). *Quan Song Ci* 全宋詞. Vol 1. Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1965. 92.

Collection | Love Songs of the Medieval World: Lyrics from Europe and Asia

URL | <https://sourcebook.stanford.edu/text/tune-%E2%80%9CQingping-music%E2%80%9Dgold-wind>

Translation by Qian Jia. Introduction and notes by Nina Du and Runqi Zhang.

Introduction to the Text

Yan Shu, a powerful statesman in the early Northern Song court, had a long and successful career both as an official and as a poet. Among his many literary achievements (which include poetry, song lyrics and prose) his *ci* compositions are best known. His lyrics are elegant in their choice of words, controlled in the emotions they express, and not as playful as the *ci* of other well-known poets. They often capture feelings of solitude and sorrow, creating a melancholic mood, but the poet is rarely explicit about what triggers the worry or sadness.

By presenting autumn tropes and images that evoke the natural processes of decay, this song conveys the speaker's feelings of loss and loneliness. Many readers may assume that the person being described is female, but there is really no unmistakable mark of this. A "gold" (or "metallic") wind is the west wind, the wind of autumn, owing to associations between elements, directions, and seasons. The silver screen in the last line is the screen that stands before the speaker's bed.



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清平樂

To the tune "Sands of the Washing Stream"

金風細細。
葉葉梧桐墜。
綠酒初嘗人易醉。
一枕小窗濃睡。

The gold wind is gentle and tender,
The leaves of the parasol tree fall one by one.
The first taste of the green wine easily makes one tipsy.
Lying by the window, I sleep soundly.

5 紫薇朱槿花殘。
斜陽卻照闌干。
雙燕欲歸時節，
銀屏昨夜微寒。

5 The crepe-myrtle and hibiscus have withered,
But the slanting sun still shines on the railing.
It is the time when swallows are about to depart in pairs;
Last night it was slightly cold behind the silver screen.

Critical Notes

Translation

Line 1 "Gold wind" refers to the autumn wind.

Line 3 "Green wine" refers to fine wine.

Line 8 "Silver screen" refers to the screen separating the women's room from the living area, where only men were allowed.