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Legend of the Demon Cat

By Baku Yumemakura

Is the melon sweet?
Who's there?
Me.
May I have some?
Looking for me?
Over here.
Come. I'll pay for my meal.
There's money buried under that tree.
Dig it up, it's yours.
I'll be back.
The Master is home.
Yunqiao
Chunqin
Hurry
I have to tell you...
There really was buried treasure?
That sound
I've heard it in my dreams.
In the 21st year of the emperor's reign,
the Japanese monk Kukai came to Chang'an
for an exorcism.
How long has he been like this?
His eyes haven't shut for a week.
Please begin.
Scribe Bai-
Present.

Write:

Write
Master Kukai-
The emperor's death must be kept secret.
Go, and it'll be as if you were never here.
Oh!
Wipe your shoes.
So I'd come to cure the emperor's disease.
But that was no ordinary illness.
Master Kukai-
Scribe Bai
Why didn't you say anything?
The imperial physician said
he died of illness.
No illness keeps a man awake for a week.
I'm the scribe, I must keep exact records.
I can't write anything I'm unsure about.

How long have you been a scribe?
Three years. Why?
The emperor's pet cat is black, yes?
In three years, I never saw a pet cat.
When I kowtowed I got fur on my hands.
True. Only cat fur is this fine and soft.
What are you looking for?
Pawprints?
Not only did a cat enter the palace,
it was near the emperor's bed.
A cat was involved with his death?
What's this?
The Emperor is dead. Li Song is next.
Who's Li Song?
The prince, the next emperor.
He'll be back tomorrow.
Who?
The cat.
We'll have to buy more fish.
Nothing too big. He only eats the eyes.
(Death to he who uses this.)
This was part of the old palace.
What's that noise?
Careful.
Huh. Just a cat.
It's a time of mourning. Stay alert.
C'mon, let's go.
Master Kukai
Scribe Bai
You're right, there's a cat in the palace.
You saw it?
No. The night patrol told me.
And another strange thing...
Go on.
Chen Yunqiao, an imperial guard,
had a talking cat at his house.
Where'd you hear that?
His servants were gossiping.
Too bad I'm leaving.
It's none of my business now.
And you, will you report it?
It's none of my business, either.
I'm finished. I quit!
I've retired to devote myself to poetry.

I'm a poet.
I've heard Chang'an is full of poets.
I'm different.
I could have been a high official.
I chose not to.
But why be a lowly scribe?
That's for my poetry too.
Only a scribe stays in the palace,
seeing the emperor's every move.
Like a eunuch, minus the inconvenience.
Your poem is about palace life?
Yes. No more questions. I'll say no more.
What's the poem called?
Song of Everlasting Sorrow
So it's a love poem.
I told you, I'm not talking.
Who's it about?
The emperor, right?
So you needed to understand him.
Enough!
His love had to be a concubine.
Explain, why you say "had to be"?
He didn't pick his empress. Forget servants.
Who else is there?
Clever!
You're too kind.
You're right.
It's about the emperor's love for a lady.
Is it finished?
Not yet!
When it is, history will remember me.
But don't tell anyone yet!
Was Li Bo the greatest Tang poet?
Li Bo lived a long time ago.
He was lucky- it was a golden age.
Have you heard of Bai Juyi?
He is the greatest poet of today!
Oh? When will you introduce me?
Bai Juyi is very full of himself.
He makes his own rules,
lives for poetry, and sees no one!
Kukai, what's up with you?
Why rush back to Japan?
Why did you really come here?

To study with Abbot Huiguo at Qinglong Temple
but I couldn't get a foot in the door.
Kukai, it's not just you.
Qinglong is the home of Tantric Buddhism.
Huiguo obtained the Tantric secrets abroad.
Of more than a thousand monks,
he says none are fit to be his disciples!
Have some melon!
One melon can't feed everyone.
I'll make some more.
Great!
Water
It's sprouting! It's sprouting!
Sprouting!
See that?
Grow!
Bigger!
Bloom!
Bravo!
See that? Melons!
It's an illusion.
They're melons! We all can see them.
We've all been taken in.
Bravo!
Let's go.
Gentlemen- some melon?
I don't have money on me.
I sell illusions, not melons.
You saw through it, so no charge.
I'm sorry.
Old man-
only one melon was real, right?
Shh...
Impressive.
Is that a Japanese accent?
My name is Kukai.
It's an honor. This melon is a gift.
Too kind.
What's dripping?
He got me after all!
Toss it, quickly!
Now it's turned back into a melon.
What a powerful illusion.
Now I might believe in a talking cat.

What was that guard's name?
Chen Yunqiao.
Hey, Yunqiao, slow down.
The girls don't wait for anyone.
Giddyap!
Chen Yunqiao is the one in the middle.
Here!
Girls, where are you going?
Come with us!
Don't take my girl tonight!
You're all here.
We want our bonus!
Here!
Where are they going?
Huyu House-
The city's top brothel!
Are you still game?
Of course I am!
Hurry up, girls.
Coming!
Yunqiao! Yunqiao!
Yunqiao! Yunqiao!
Pardon me!
I'm Yulian.
Why haven't we met before?
Yulian is new here.
Sir.
This flower is crooked.
Let's go.
C'mon. You'll be mine tonight.
Sister Lixiang...
How weird.
This is the Tang of romance!
Aren't brothels forbidden to monks?
You're entering a brothel.
I'm here for the beautiful music.
Scribe Bai!
I got your gown back from the pawn shop.
Excellent. Pawn it again!
Sure!
I see you're a regular.
But first time here with a monk!
It's you who looks like a regular!
For you!

Reward them! Tips for all!
Beautiful dancing, Yulian.
Drink up.
Chen Yunqiao.
Who's that?
Me.
Spent all the money? Want more?
Want more?
That's the cat!
Yunqiao, your cat's here with your purse!
I've thrown a feast and paid you all
but what to offer a mere animal?
Have a fish.
I only eat eyeballs.
You know that.
Whose eyes will you give me?
Over there!
Up there!
Beast!
Yunqiao.
Debts must be repaid.
Listen up.
I'll see you at home tomorrow night.
My eyes!
My eyes!
Chunqin!
What sort of monster did this?
A cat.
What's the link to the cat in the palace?
They're one and the same.
Oh?
Three heavy pawprints, one light.
Exactly the same.
But what's that mean?
One of its legs was injured.
Look here, Inspector Li.
You said the emperor
was 'frightened to death'. By this cat?
I'm sure of it.
Then we wronged you,
Scribe Bai.
You didn't resign.
Fired, resigned, same thing.
A lowly official still has principles.

All I ask is not to record lies.
Yesterday, they crowned the prince.
Straight away, he became paralyzed.
The emperor is dead. Li Song is next.
The prophecy has come to pass.
No emperor has had a curse before.
Who can lift it?
Kukai is from Japan.
He's a famous exorcist.
Who better to take on the demon cat?
Why do this to me?
You're an exorcist.
You want to get into Qinglong Temple.
Now you've good reason to stay!
Right.
What are you thinking?
Why did the cat attack Chen Yunqiao?
He's head of the Imperial Guards.
What's their role?
To protect the emperor.
His family has done this
for three generations.
Three generations?
The cat said, "Debts will be repaid."
But who incurred this debt?
What kind of debt
sees two emperors fall
and their top guard attacked?
The palace?
Why are we here?
You asked whose debt it is.
Whose is it?
A previous emperor for sure.
One from the past?
What's the connection to Chen Yunqiao?
Is the cat really coming back?
He told me so last night.
You brought on this disaster.
You spent the money.
Shh...
Chunqin!
She's your wife.
Will you save her?
Help! Help!

Open the door!
Yunqiao, save me!
Save me!
Chunqin!
Save me, Yunqiao!
How'd you get here?
You weren't going to save me.
Who are you?
Yulian is sick?
She fell into a coma.
No, she was poisoned.
Huh?
Get some raw meat, hurry!
Ok.
Such beauty,
rotting like a dead flower!
No time for poems. Find a brush and ink.
Let me stay for the night.
Hmph.
What's with all the Buddhist symbols?
It's not just a symbol. It's light.
Look.
Here.
Is it fresh?
Yes.
Give it to Bai.
Needle.
Hold on to her!
Catch them.
What are these?
Venom worms!
They poison living flesh.
Only raw meat can draw them out.
Who did this to her?
Someone with a grudge.
For sure it's Lixiang.
Yunqiao was her lover.
She hated her for stealing him!
Not necessarily.
The wine was meant for Yunqiao.
He unwittingly gave it to Yulian.
Master-
Please... save my wife too!
Huh?

Her robes, clouds; her face, flowers.
Careful!
Where are you going?
Chunqin?!
Shh...
So who was that?
An illusion.
How do you know?
She cast no shadow.
Only cats walk on rooftops.
What poem was she reciting?
It's by Li Bo.
It likens beauty to clouds and flowers.
When was it written and where?
Let me take you somewhere.
What is this place?
The imperial library.
I think of it as my own.
Over there.
You lost your job but still come here?
Whatever.
Push, Kukai!
Stop.
What...
A little bit more.
Ok.
Stop.
It was the spring of 755.
Emperor Li
was celebrating his beloved's birthday.
Who was his beloved?
The exotic beauty Lady Yang.
The Tang emperor
had 3000 women, but eyes only for one.
Emperor Li adored her.
He filled a giant pool with wine
and the hall with 100,000 flowers.
Guests came from all over.
He called it the Feast of Supreme Joy!
Emperor Li ordered Li Bo
to write a poem for Lady Yang.
Her robes, clouds; her face, flowers.
Li Bo guarded his talent,
writing happily about common folk,

but shunning the rich and privileged.
This poem was the only exception.
He wrote it at the Feast of Supreme Joy.
His first sight of Lady Yang
drove him to madness.
Madness?
Only madness
could inspire such a great poem.
Li Bo wrote at the emperor's behest.
The first line...
Her robes, clouds; her face, flowers.
Having seen her face,
why write only of clouds and flowers?
Good monk-
hers was a beauty beyond words.
It's poetry
as romantic as her beauty and his love.
Come!
All great emperors
want to grow the realm and inspire awe.
Emperor Li was no different.
But that wasn't the real him.
Daring to give up imperial glory for love-
that was Emperor Li.
He loved Lady Yang-
he saw her as the soul of the dynasty.
Often in my dreams at night,
I live in those glorious times-
I too am at the feast
and lay my eyes on her.
May I ask
how many poems did Li Bo write?
He was a legend-
too many to count.
So why'd the demon cat pick this one?
Who was he reciting for?
What do you mean?
It was for you.
If you, like Li Bo,
are writing about Lady Yang...
Your "Song of Everlasting Sorrow"
is about the emperor's love for Lady Yang.
Am I right?
Quality guaranteed!

How much for one?
Didn't I give you one before?
Yes. It was delicious.
Say what you came to say.
Your magic. There's one thing I don't get.
It's magic, what's there to get?
It's just tricks, right?
But a killer cat is no mere trick.
So I'd like your advice.
What do cats have to do with melons?
If a melon isn't a melon,
then a cat...?
Isn't a cat!
What is it, then?
You think melons come from thin air?
Inside the illusion is reality.
So I must look to the cat itself.
Tha n k yo u!
Yunqiao's house?
Will I end up dead and eyeless too?
Not yet.
What's that supposed to mean?
It probably knows about your poem.
That tree wasn't here yesterday!
Who's that woman?
Isn't it Chunqin?
No.
Beware the magic!
It wasn't like this last night.
Hey-
gentlemen, come on up.
Have a seat. There's tea.
Kukai, I hear tea is popular in Japan too.
Yes.
You know his name?
I know you, too, Bai Juyi-
the famous poet of Chang'an!
Indeed.
The one who makes his own rules.
Juyi, have you finished your poem?
I told you she knew you were writing it.
In fact, you finished it long ago,
but you're not happy with it,
and it's no wonder

because it's not the real story.
And Lady Yang didn't inspire Li Bo's poem.
He met her only after he wrote it.
You're saying he faked it?
If it wasn't sincere...
why recite it from the roof?
Her robes, clouds; her face, flowers.
Lady Yang loved that poem.
She told Li Bo that herself.
But didn't you say they hadn't met?
Oh they met.
But only after he wrote the poem
and threw his brush into the pool of wine.
How do you know all that?
I was there.
Where?
At the banquet.
Which banquet?
The "Feast of Supreme Joy".
Who are you?
But first tell us about the injury.
It's your back paw, right?
Yes.
I was Emperor Li's pet cat.
We should've grown old together.
But when the rebellion came,
he abandoned me
and fled for his life.
And then?
After that,
a cruel man buried me alive.
But it wasn't my fate to die. I escaped.
That's why you put a curse on him.
He ordered them to bury me.
I'm not done with them yet!
What do you have against Yunqiao?
It was his father who buried me alive.
That all happened thirty years ago.
A cat doesn't live that long.
While here to take revenge
I ate a poisonous fish
and died under the bed.
My soul was trapped in my body
and I turned into a demon.

Why use Chunqin to recite the poem?
Why show us Lady Yang by the tree?
Is there a secret you want to tell us?
Did I not share her fate?
Who?
Cat skin?
Master Kukai, thank you.
Scribe Bai.
How dare they play banned music.
Lady Yang loved to dance.
Emperor Li wrote the song for her himself.
It was banned after the rebellion.
Yunqiao!
You brought on this disaster!
It's your fault!
Stop it!
I want you dead!
Kukai! Save Chunqin!
Ku ka i!
Chunqin!
Chunqin!
Don't bury me.
It's cold down there...
What?
It wasn't me who killed her!
Yunqiao?
Reward! Reward!
Reward!
Don't tell me that was all an illusion.
Yunqiao went mad.
Chunqin is dead.
Did you hear her last words?
Don't bury me, it's cold down there.
The cat said he shared her fate-
was he talking about Lady Yang?
They tried to bury the cat alive.
He was trying to tell us
that Lady Yang was buried alive too.
Do you realise what you're saying?
You say don't let the magic fool you
but you trust everything that cat says.
This time you fell for it, not me!
Who said you could come in?
The door was open.

I told you- Juyi doesn't receive guests!
What good is that?
The cat saw these drawings
and made Chunqin your vision of Lady Yang.
From palace to brothel to Yungqiao's house-
he has been guiding you towards the truth.
But why me?
Because of your poem.
I also understand
that if Lady Yang was buried alive
then your years of toil were wasted.
Understand?
You just get here and you understand?
Cold nights agonizing over a single word-
what do you know of "toil"?
Because you are Juyi.
Because thirty years have passed,
and only you keep Lady Yang in your heart.
Her death is recorded in history!
The rebellion, Emperor Li's escape,
and the mutiny of his troops,
forced him to order
Eunuch Gao to strangle her.
You know
a scribe can falsify records.
That's why
I risked my life to steal the evidence.
Oh?
From the palace? Let's see it!
'Jade Girl' was her baby name.
A lock of hair- it was a token of her love.
Emperor Li died years ago,
leaving behind countless treasures.
But his most secret treasure chest
held only this silk pouch.
If he didn't adore her,
why keep a lock of her hair there?
You're in love with her too.
You're as obsessed as him.
I want justice for her.
The dynasty's decline wasn't her fault.
She shouldn't be buried alone.
So I'll do what Emperor Li could not-
I'll bring her back to life!

But as you wrote,
you had doubts.
Aware of this,
the demon cat is trying to tell you
you didn't get the story right.
Sure, I'll never write as well as Li Bo.
I'm happy to live in his shadow.
Just don't say my poem is a lie.
Speaking of lies,
I'm a fake myself.
You're not a monk?
I'm an ordinary shaman.
Japan's top exorcist is my master.
But he is unwell,
so sent me in his stead.
I'm here for the Tantric teachings.
Kukai-
In all my years, I've yet
to find enlightenment.
I suffer in mind and body.
China has obtained the Tantric teachings
for release from the cycle of life and death.
Kukai,
please,
you must bring back these teachings.
And so I resolved to come here.
Those were his last words.
Master.
Goodbye.
The journey tested my pride and confidence.
Aren't you afraid?
With my baby asleep, I'm at peace.
The waves pushed me under. I was terrified.
I struggled to stay alive.
In the face of death,
I forgot every prayer.
But I'll never forget her words.
Why couldn't I stay as calm as her?
Since I survived,
I must seek answers in those teachings.
I found a witness to Lady Yang's death.
Back then, in the palace,
I was Lady Yang's morning maid.
Ask me anything you like.

Were you there when she died?

Yes.

The emperor gave the order.

I wove the silk execution cloth
and gave it to Eunuch Gao.

See?

And then?

When they called us in,
Lady Yang was already dead.

So you didn't see Gao strangle her.

I couldn't bear it.

I'm sorry.

Even the emperor turned away.

So how did you know she was dead?

Captain Chen of the guards checked.

He held incense under her nose.

The smoke didn't waver,
proof that she'd stopped breathing.

How did she look after death?

Like she was sleeping,
even lovelier than when she was alive.

So you wove the execution cloth.

She looked like she was asleep?

That's strange.

If she'd been strangled,
she'd be in terrible pain.

I don't get it either.

Who was Captain Chen?

I told you before.

Yunqiao is a third-generation guard.

Captain Chen was Yunqiao's dad,
the instigator of the mutiny.

It's clear now-

the cat attacks anyone involved in her death.

So then why spare the old woman?

What!

Hurry!

I shouldn't have brought you here.

Bai-

Who else survived the mutiny at Maweiyi?

Catch.

Did any escape?

Chao Heng? Who's that?

A Japanese, like you.

A senior envoy. He was here a long time.

Abe no Nakamaro?

That's the one!

Oh.

He was at Maweiyi too?

Yes, but he died a long time ago.

Because he's Japanese,
he had no records in the archives.

So I wrote "to be completed".

Did Abe have a home here?

Yes, his widow Bai Ling is still alive.

Shhh...

Hurry!

You again.

And who is this?

Pardon us.

I'm Kukai, a shaman from Japan.

This way.

Did Mr Abe ever wish to return to Japan?

He changed his mind at the last minute,
watched his ship sail, and returned.

then returned to Chang'an.

Why?

Because of a woman.

He didn't know if she was alive or dead.

Did he ever find out?

I never asked.

He was here a long time.

Did he leave behind a journal?

Yes. He asked me to burn it.

But you couldn't do it?

No. Regretfully, I read it.

That's how I knew he loved another.

Yet you stayed. Aren't you lonely?

(Here lies Abe no Nakamaro)

Why not give me the journal?

Maybe I can release his soul
and salve his troubled heart.

Thirty years have passed.

I still remember the first line-

I'm a heartless man.

I'm a heartless man,

besotted with the emperor's woman.

(Thirty years earlier...)

Today is her birthday.
All of Chang'an is astir.
To allow them a glimpse of her,
the emperor came up with this idea.
Her exotic looks
had won his love.
It was an enlightened age,
and she was its pride and joy, its symbol,
to which all eyes were drawn.
I will profess my love to her
at her birthday feast tonight.
(The Pavilion of Swirling Petals)
(The Pavilion of Swirling Petals)
Everyone says,
all this is her idea.
It's her vision
of the Tang in all its glory.
What a marvelous woman!
M'Lady, the emperor wants to know-
do you like his gift of this red robe?
Do you like it- or not?
Where is the emperor?
M'lord, M'lady. Watch this!
A tiger for M'Lord, flowers for M'lady!
I still prefer my cat.
The illusionist was Yellow Crane,
the realm's most famous magician.
White Crane.
Coming!
I want to catch those flowers!
Go
How rude!
No rules tonight!
Catch!
I'd never seen the two boys before.
They were Yellow Crane's disciples-
Red Crane and White Crane.
So there really was a cat?
You reek of wine,
you don't wash, your robes are filthy.
Even dirty, I'm cleaner than you.
Get off.
Li Bo,
wealth and rank is yours at last.

Who are you?
What do you want?
My name is Gao Lishi.
His Majesty wants you to write a poem.
What about?
A great beauty.
There aren't any.
Sure there are. It's not so hard.
No one tells me what to write.
Can't do.
The Emperor isn't 'no one'.
If he tells you to write, you write!
Take off my boots and I'll do it.
I only do that for the emperor!
Lady Yang said
at her birthday feast, all are equal.
This is a test. So it's not true after all.
Gao Lishi-
Yes.
You're disobeying her and the emperor!
It's Lady Yang's hairpin.
No!
What are you looking at?
So you're the Flying Cranes?
Amazing.
It's an illusion.
It's nothing-
Just "now you see it now you don't".
Am I wrong?
No.
Give Lady Yang her hairpin.
Keep it.
Now you see it now you don't.
You're older?
I am.
Dad found him by the river
and called him White Dragon.
Don't lie to Lady Yang.
My dad was a gambler.
He sold me to Master Yellow Crane.
The master is my father.
Wait.
Look at me.
I was an orphan

raised by my uncle.
Living under another's roof
made me grateful and beholden.
You're the same, yes?
Only as a pair are you the Flying Cranes.
Her robes, clouds...
Come.
Her face, flowers
Spring breezes, a dewy loveliness
seen only in heaven's peaks
and moonlight pavilions.
Finished!
No revisions?
Not a word.
What did you write?
Is it good?
See for yourself.
Time for my nap.
(The Pavilion of Swirling Petals)
Bai!
Li Bo's brush.
The demon cat was right!
Wake up!
Lady Yang is here to see you.
Thank you for my poem.
Huh?
Have I written you a poem?
Which one's that?
Her robes, clouds, her face, flowers
It's beautiful.
You flatter me.
It's not that great.
Anyway, I didn't write it for you.
Of course you did.
If not for M'Lady, who was it for?
I don't know,
but I can't lie.
Put on your shoes.
Li Bo.
You enrich our dynasty.
Her robes, clouds, her face, flowers.
Why's it written on your back?
Did he write this on his own
or did you make him do it?

Your Majesty-
Turn around.
Speak.
It was Li Bo's idea.
Lady Yang loves it.
Should I reward him?
Yes, richly.
Have him exiled...
for life.
And your poem?
should I give it to M'Lady?
No need.
Abe!
Why are you here?
To see me, I'm sure.
We received your gift.
Very nice.
No-
that's not why I'm here.
I know why you're here.
But remember-
at no time
will you find Lady Yang on her own.
We're bound together for eternity.
Let's go.
The last guests are here.
The emperor didn't kill me
but his compassion and disdain
slayed me in front of my beloved.
He had written something.
Abe- the calligraphy is for you.
Guess what it means.
The Greatest Happiness
To control all others-
that was his "greatest happiness".
The last to arrive was General An.
The emperor welcomed him
with a martial performance.
He knew General An wanted to rebel
but made him feel special.
He was ruler of the world and trusting.
Above the fray.
This is Yanqiu Gate.
Ten days after the feast,

general An rebelled.
At first, Emperor Li stayed put.
But An wanted Lady Yang
so they fled Chang'an.
100,000 went with him.
I'm still the emperor!
During the escape,
the imperial guards
mutinied at Maweiyi.
They said only Lady Yang's death
would end the rebellion
and bring peace.
Eunuch Gao has returned.
Open the doors.
The head of Lady Yang's brother.
Now Captain Chen wants Lady Yang's head.
Impossible!
Then he can't promise his loyalty.
Your Majesty...
What is it?
Try.
But it's unlikely.
Yellow Crane.
M'Lady- a word in private?
You want to take me to Japan?
It's also the emperor's idea.
The rebels killed your brother.
It's all my fault.
But if I go, they'll kill the emperor.
If you don't, they'll kill you.
Abe,
Yes?
you've been here a long time.
Time to go home.
But not with me.
Abe!
M'Lady
You had something else to say to me?
Towards the end of the feast
Lady Yang foresaw her fate.
She'd been the glory of the dynasty.
In crisis, it no longer needed her.
At Maweiyi,
she craved all words of love.

She knew
as death approached
they could be... the last.
I understand.
It's all in your eyes.
I'm content.
The rebels had killed her family.
If they took her too, or she killed herself,
the helpless emperor
would be doomed as well.
If she went to Japan, the rebels
would've killed him.
For the sake of his dignity and safety
she could neither live nor die.
You're saying there's a third way?
I have an foolproof plan
to save the emperor- and M'Lady too.
Red Crane, lie down.
I call this the "Immortal Path".
It resembles hibernation.
I can put M'Lady into a deep sleep.
One needle
stops the pulse, breath
and heartbeat.
It fools the gods themselves.
Hence- the "Immortal Path"!
Then what?
Though she won't be breathing,
she'll come to no harm.
Neither will she age.
We seal her Qi inside her body.
I won't let him do this to you.
Your Majesty
Your Majesty
look!
You're awake?
Sit up.
The Qi isn't yet in full flow.
He just needs a short rest.
It's the only way to save her.
Say you put her into a deep sleep.
What next?
Seal and bury the coffin.
Wait till things settle.

Open it, extract the needle
and welcome her back!
Will she suffer?
There's no pain.
My love
I'd rather see Eunuch Gao
take my head on a platter
than break my vows to you.
I won't let you bury her alive!
My love, will you do it?
He was going to bury her alive.
Yellow Crane put the needle in.
Soon she stopped breathing
and seemed to be dead.
What will you tell Captain Chen?
I gave him the white execution scarf.
But she has no bruises on her neck.
Chen won't fall for it.
Eunuch Gao, you do it.
So... I'll be punished for her murder?
And you did it behind His Majesty's back.
I did it for you, Your Majesty-
I did it for you.
The emperor convinced Captain Chen
that Lady Yang was dead.
He was the real master of illusion!
I said nothing.
You're saying-
they never planned to revive her.
They tricked her into agreeing?
What other kind of death
would leave her so peaceful-
with a heart full of love and hope?
Long live Emperor Li and Lady Yang!
She was buried in an ancient tomb.
All who knew about it would be killed.
I was no exception.
Only the cat would keep her company.
If you are reading my diary
remember-
to get to the tomb
cross the drowned forest.
In her last moments
she still didn't know the truth-

right?
She knew.
She saw his dilemma.
She sacrificed herself to help him.
If she knew that
when they said goodbye-
why give him a lock of her hair?
Did she still love him?
Maybe she thought this was love-
to make the ultimate sacrifice.
I should burn my poem.
I want to visit her tomb.
I want to know the truth.
This is it.
Come in.
Who opened the stone door?
Someone was here first.
Ku ka i!
They've moved the lid.
Huh?
The lid is askew.
Give me a hand!
Push!
I don't dare look.
I don't want to look.
Bai!
Ku ka i!
Maybe we were both wrong.
Maybe the "Immortal Path" was real.
What're you doing?
Give me the candle.
Close the lid.
You're insane!
Close it.
Bai
Ku ka i!
Ku ka i!
What's this?
Blood from her fingers.
She wasn't dead!
She tried to escape, but couldn't.
That's right.
She woke up inside!
You're White Crane?

And Lady Yang?
Where is she?
You got it
Kukai
She knew it was a lie.
But didn't know she'd wake up,
or how long it would take to die.
Is this vision you and Red Crane?
On the second night of the mutiny
Guards took the emperor away.
Red Crane and I escaped
the slaughter and snuck back
to save Lady Yang.
M'Lady
She was still alive?!
She's dead.
Shhh...
The magic makes her look alive.
It can't bring her back to life.
What do you mean?
The master said so.
You just have to pull out the needle.
He said that to fool her.
Who'd want to be known as her killer?
Not even the emperor!
So Dad invented the "Immortal Path".
How do you know?
They talked about it at Maweiyi Station.
Yellow Crane!
Talked about what?
How to trick Lady Yang!
But-
you stopped breathing.
You can seal off Qi for two days.
Then the person wakes up.
I thought the wine
would prevent her waking.
What was the wine?
Immortal Path wine.
I prepared it myself.
Dad added demon worms.
Why didn't you tell me?
I only found out later.
You visited the tomb with me.

He's my dad! I couldn't betray him
You still went with me to the tomb.
What did you hope to see?
You're as evil as them.
Get lost.
White Crane-
Who do you have in the world
besides me?
I have her.
She will wake up!
Red Crane never returned?
White Crane-
The Lady Yang we knew is dead.
I'm as upset as you.
How can men be so evil?
I want to end this suffering.
After that?
What happened?
You needed raw meat!
I know.
I can't die.
If I did, she'd have no one!
Your spirit entered the cat.
You'll never be human again.
Fine with me.
Once inside the body of the cat
his memory became mine.
Suddenly
I heard Lady Yang's desperate screams.
How'd you get back here?
Weren't you protecting Lady Yang?
I was protecting her!
But I got hungry.
And no fish eyes to eat there.
But everyone thought
he went blind weeping for her.
He lied, but he knew the truth.
You need to write that in your poem.
Or I'll kill you too.
You've already killed so many.
Many?
Three generations and I'm not done yet.
Your final target is Red Crane.
That's right.

And Lady Yang?
Where is she?
Is she still alive?
Tell me. Is she still alive?
She will wake up!
How long can you lie to yourself?
The melon magician?
What does he want?
He invited us to the banquet.
(Feast of Supreme Joy)
Just you two?
There'll be others.
That's Li Bo!
Lady Yang might speak to us tonight.
No way.
Bet?
Sure.
It's Lady Yang's jade hairpin.
So you're the Flying Cranes.
Red Crane-
Still playing with magic?
I knew it was you who took us back there.
I wanted to relive that time-
the golden era of the Flying Cranes.
The Flying Cranes are no more.
Yet Lady Yang is eternal.
Is she still alive?
Ku ka i!
I've guarded her for thirty years!
No one is to touch her!
I know you hated me for leaving.
But I've been with you all along.
See who that is?
I laid out your body in a frozen cave,
waiting for this day to come.
That is all I ever wanted.
I have no regrets.
I haven't inhabited that body for years.
White Crane-
Lady Yang would tell you
she's no longer in her body either.
Kill me now if you like.
I knew she was dead.
I just couldn't let her go.

I'm going back to Japan.

Oh.

What about the Tantric teachings?

I found in the story of Lady Yang
the greatest teachings of all.

It's in 'Song of Everlasting Sorrow' too.

Oh.

It's finished?

I'm not changing a word!

You wanted it to tell the true story.

The emotions are true.

White Crane showed us that.

But he's not in your poem.

He wrote it, not me.

That's how it is.

I'm off.

For that alone

you surpass Li Bo!

I would try the temple a second time.

To my surprise, the doors opened.

Master Huiguo is waiting for you!

He says you know him.

Ku ka i!?

Red Crane,

we meet again.

Did you find the secret key

to bring suffering to an end?