

Island of Farewell

辭郎洲

Yip Shiu Tak's Cantonese Opera Manuscripts

葉紹德粵劇劇本精選

Scripted by YIP Shiu-tak

葉紹德編劇

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This Translation

by

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Translation Project of Yip Shiu Tak's Cantonese Opera Manuscripts

葉紹德粵劇劇本翻譯計劃

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Translator's Note on Translation

1. Parenthesis () are used for stage directions, music directions and stage effects.
2. Names of characters and places are transliterated into Mandarin pinyin.
3. Names of percussion style, singing style, and music notations are transliterated into Cantonese pinyin.
4. Tunes and song titles are literally translated and marked with double quotation marks.
5. I have adopted the use of the terms "exit" and "exeunt" to indicate characters going off stage.
6. At the end of each act, I have included a list of annotations explaining certain paraphrasing, metaphors, proverbs, and idioms used within the act that would not be easily understood by non-Chinese readers.
7. I have adopted the use of onomatopoeia for sounds of sighing, exclamations, or expressions.
8. Incidentally, as a Cantonese opera performer, I wish to display something more than a written translation of an opera script. I chose to keep and translate the percussion titles (Cantonese pinyin) and formulaic movement titles (literally translated) as directed by the script, in hope of offering the reader a glimpse at the rhythm of the opera.
9. I have also kept the speech type indicator "Nimbaak" in my translation as directed in the script.

ISLAND OF FAREWELL

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ACT 1

Curtains open with a single line of “Paaji” tune and “Hoi Biin” percussion.
Two maids accompany XU DA-NIANG to enter.

XU DA-NIANG

[Speaks: Sibaak]

Wars abound far and near leaving no land in peace,
Where can one find Utopia when a country is in such dire state?

[Sings: Chatjiching upper line]

**Gazing North at Bianliang in tears,
Unbearable to see the northern barbarians dwell in the Central Plain.
Young heroes and heroines would have their heads cut off,
Rather than living under humiliation.
Swords are readily sharpened at the Phoenix Mountain,
Awaiting an order to rescue the emperor.**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

**Reconstructing our country from scratch,
Thousands of whips thrown into the river can halt the river flow.**

[Singing to an abrupt stop and speaks]

I am XU DA-NIANG . My husband died defending our country against the Yuan Dynasty. We have no son, only a daughter. I have upheld the instructions of my late husband, leading our tribal troops to fight the Yuan army and protect our homeland. Fortunately, we enlisted the assistance of the couple, ZHANG DA and BI-NIANG, so for now the Northern barbarians dare not face us directly. My daughter RUI-ZHU has come of age, and together with LEI JUN, their childhood innocence has grown into love. LEI JUN seems like a man of faith and loyalty, thus a good choice as a son-in-law. Therefore, I invited ZHANG DA and his wife to come and be their matchmaker.

[Sibaak]

Ai! To fulfill my wish for my children like Xiang Ping,
I shall match up the loving mandarin ducks despite the chaos.

LEI JUN

[*Enters and sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

**Arching the bow, I have yet to try shooting You Ji's arrow,
Riding the horse, I strive to raise my whip like Zu Di.
Abandoning my books for a year
In exchange for the Dragon Spring Sword.**

[*Enters and speaks*]

LEI JUN pays respect to you, DA-NIANG.

DA-NIANG

[*Speaks*]

Good son Jun, there is no need for excessive formalities.

LEI JUN

[*Questions and speaks*]

DA-NIANG has summoned me to come. Has the date been set for the rebellion or the rescue of the emperor?

DA-NIANG

[*Smiles and speaks*]

Not so. Jun always keeps the country's affairs in mind and it is hard to seek someone like you in this world. No wonder RUI-ZHU is in love with you. Has Jun ever thought of forming your own family?

LEI JUN

[*Embarrassed with "Yat Choi" percussion and stutteringly speaks*]

DA-NIANG, I...

DA-NIANG

[*Interrupts and speaks*]

Hey! Saying has it that "A man of age should marry." There is no need to be embarrassed.

LEI JUN

[*Speaks*]

DA-NIANG, I lost my parents when I was young, and you have raised me to adulthood. RUI-ZHU and I are... but loving siblings. (*"Yat Choi" percussion*) Besides, the northern barbarians have not been defeated, how can one think of forming a family?

DA-NIANG

[Smiles and speaks]

Jun, precisely at this chaotic time, I wish to have you two wedded in haste. So that my private wish may be fulfilled.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Counting the years you have reached the year of weak cap, and
RUI-ZHU has reached the year of hairpin.
An upright man only worries about restoring the country, and
Has completely forgotten about home.**

LEI JUN

[Speaks]

DA-NIANG.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Though we have not enjoyed the courtesy of husband and wife,
Like tangled braids, we are inseparable.
Unlike vegetation, humans have feelings.
Pity our affections occur in such chaotic times.**

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Jun, there is no need to hesitate. Liang Hong-yu assisted her husband in defeating the Jin army. My wish is for you two to fight the Yuan, restore the country together as a couple, following the good example of the past. For this purpose, I have invited ZHANG DA and his wife to come and be your matchmaker.

LEI JUN

[Hearing ZHANG DA's name, reacts and speaks]

ZHANG DA!

[Thinks and speaks]

Speaking of General ZHANG DA, there is one thing I do not understand, and wish to ask for DA-NIANG's opinion.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Jun, please speak.

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Haugu]

DA-NIANG, for months Lady ZHANG DA has been training our tribe on martial arts and military tactics. She encourages us frequently, wishes for us to go north to fight and expel the Northern barbarians. Why does the general have no ambition, focusing solely on guarding the land and resisting the Yuan, with no plans to fight for the country?

DA-NIANG

[*Sighs* and speaks: Haugu]

Ai! This is because the emperor is slow-witted, and the double-dealing courtiers betrayed the country. Back then, the general was high-spirited and fought for the country. Thrice he led troops to rescue the emperor, which incited jealousy from others, and ended up being banished from court and stripped of all opportunities. He no longer cares to restore the country, and wishes only to defend the countryside.

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Haugu]

In that case, the general is too narrow-minded and lacks vision. If one day the Northern barbarians unified the central plains, Raoping County cannot sustain alone. One who is meant to achieve greatness must endure hardships.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks: Haugu]

Jun, your ambitions are commendable. I also hope the general will change his mind one day. Private matters must subside for the greater interest. May the time to raise the flag for our righteous cause will come soon. For now, let me give my daughter to this good lad.

[Speaks]

RUI-ZHU.

RUI-ZHU

[*Enters with "Faai Ng Choi" percussion and towards audience sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

**This beautiful maiden is skilled in archery and riding,
And not used to embroidering the phoenixes.
No need for the fairy bird to deliver love letters,
My love shall be sent via an arrow.**

[*Pays respect* and speaks]

Mother, your daughter pays respect to you.

(*With "Yat Choi" percussion, sees LEI JUN and lowers her head without looking again*)

DA-NIANG

[Speaks: Haugu]

RUI-ZHU, you are a grown-up now. Saying has it that, "All young men long to fall in love, and all young girls yearn to be loved." As your mother, I have made plans for your marriage.

RUI-ZHU

[*Embarrassed upon hearing the words* and speaks: Haugu]

Mother, I will not marry. (*"Yat Choi" percussion*) I wish to die an old maid, and take care of you for your remaining years.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

As the proverb says, "A woman of age should be married off." As a mother, I know what my daughter thinks. No need to put on pretenses, go and greet your brother LEI JUN.

RUI-ZHU

[Overjoyed but embarrassed, steps forward to greet LEI JUN and speaks]

Brother Jun.

(Overwhelmed with embarrassment)

LEI JUN

[Happily speaks]

Sister Zhu.

RUI-ZHU

[Sings: "Fishing Village Bathed in Sunset Glow"]

My heart has fallen

For this handsome lad

LEI JUN

[Continues]

Glancing at her bashfulness,

As though she is leading the fisherman,

To dream of entering Utopia.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

Holding your hand as encouragement,

Do not let love dominate and forget about restoring the country.

With crimson heart and jade blood,

Fail not the match of the dragon knife and the phoenix sword.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

In short, I shall put my sword to test,

And wipe out the bandits.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

My wish is to ride beside you,

And fight the Northern barbarians together.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

Peace will be restored soon.

Wiping the country clean, covering in glorious yellow.

LEI JUN & RUI-ZHU

[Sing together]

And full moon will recur.

DA-NIANG

[*Smiles, steps forward and sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

The knife and sword are destined to unite,

Your vigorous aspirations surpass the ancestors.

May the heroes and heroines restore the country,

By constantly urging oneself to save the country and the people.

XU FU

[*Enters with "Chung Tau" percussion and speaks*]

Reporting to DA-NIANG. A court official named Wang has arrived at the foot of the mountain. He claims to be an IMPERIAL ENVOY and asks to see you.

DA-NIANG

[*Alarmed and speaks*](*"Jak Choi" percussion*)

Welcome him up the mountain immediately.

(*XU FU accepts the order and exit*)

[*Speaks: Nimbaak*]

Surprised by the IMPERIAL ENVOY's arrival,

I shall welcome his Excellency at the mountain.

(*Announcement off*)

His Excellency Wang is here.

DA-NIANG

[*Speaks*]

We shall greet him together.

(*Greets the IMPERIAL ENVOY with RUI-ZHU, LEI JUN and the two maids.*)

(*IMPERIAL ENVOY, Wang, enters with three servants holding up a tunic.*)

DA-NIANG

[*Welcomes them in and speaks*]

I am not aware of your Excellency's arrival, and have not welcomed you from afar. What an offense.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[*Speaks*]

DA-NIANG must not be over courteous. His majesty has retreated to Yamen, isolated without reinforcements. The dowager concubine knows of DA-NIANG's loyalty, thus sending me here, asking DA-NIANG to lead the tribal volunteer army to rescue the emperor. Her majesty has even personally sewn a tunic as a gift to the former Military Governor of Chaozhou, ZHANG DA, asking him to lead the volunteer army to rescue and escort the emperor.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Your Excellency, my eight thousand strong are willing to die even ten thousand times fighting for the country. But as for ZHANG DA!

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Interrupts and speaks]

DA-NIANG, the emperor was blinded by slanderous talks in the past, and banished the loyal minister. ZHANG DA is faithful and righteous he would not bear grievances. May I trouble DA-NIANG to lead me to see him at once.

DA-NIANG

[Sighs and speaks]

Ai! I think that he, having been wronged numerous times, is not yet appeased. I am afraid he will not be easily persuaded.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Worriedly speaks]

Then... then...

LEI JUN

[Immediately speaks]

Your Excellency, do not worry. Though ZHANG DA still holds grudges, but CHEN BI-NIANG is a heroine and they are coming here today. Let us persuade him together. He may be moved.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Overjoyed and speaks]

In this case, I depend on you all.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**As long as we have General Fei of the Lulong City,
The beacon fire shall be extinguished at his horse's arrival.
Luckily, this country in danger still conjures loyalty,
No need to lament for the difficult circumstances.**

XU FU

[Enters with "Dei Gam" percussion and speaks]

Reporting to DA-NIANG. General ZHANG DA and his wife have arrived. We await your orders.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Just at the right time. Excellency, now that the ZHANG DA couple is here, please avoid meeting him for the moment. Wait until he is slightly swayed and then you meet him accordingly. What do you think?

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks]

I shall follow DA-NIANG's plan.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

His Excellency has travelled from afar. XU FU, show the way to the inner hall and receive him most cordially.

XU FU

[Answers and speaks]

Yes. Excellency, this way please.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks]

Excuse me for retreating.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Your Excellency.

(Exeunt IMPERIAL ENVOY and XU FU)

(ZHANG DA and CHEN BI-NIANG enter together)

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

Retreating to the countryside to learn gardening,

Unmotivated to read manuscripts on war and invasion.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

The mandarin ducks wish to be matched up at this chaotic time.

As matchmakers, we come to the mountainside.

(Enter together)

ZHANG DA & BI-NIANG

[Seeing DA-NIANG, step forward, congratulate and speak]

Congratulations to you, DA-NIANG.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Thank you for gracing us with your presence, please forgive me for not receiving you more cordially. Jun and RUI-ZHU, come greet the general and his wife.

LEI JUN & RUI-ZHU

[*Pay respect and speak*]

I pay respect to the general and the lady.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

No need for formalities. DA-NIANG, RUI-ZHU and Jun are a destined pair, a perfect match. DA-NIANG is blessed with such good children. Congratulations.

DA-NIANG

[*Smiles and speaks*]

You are too kind. Bring on the feast.

(*Maids enter with wine*)

[Speaks]

General, my lady, please be seated.

ZHANG DA & BI-NIANG

[Speak]

After you, DA-NIANG.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Please.

(*Together they take the seats accordingly*)

[*With facial reactions and speaks: Haugu*]

Jun and RUI-ZHU, you two have been studying martial arts with the lady, and I wonder how you have progressed. With the general here today, you should take this opportunity to demonstrate for us as we feast, and the general may give you some comments.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Haugu]

DA-NIANG, today is LEI JUN and RUI-ZHU's engagement, it might be inappropriate to play with weapons. After all, this is not a feast of Hongmen, there is no need for performing a sword dance in front of the feast.

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Haugu]

General, songs and dances are ornaments in peaceful times, but practicing martial arts are useful in serving the country. I have always admired you for being an unmatched hero. Please excuse me for playing with an ax in front of Lu Ban.

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks: Haugu]

General, saying has it that “Every man and woman is responsible for the country.” As we are being invaded at this time, there is no distinction between the genders. As a girl, I am not good at needlework, but I sleep on my spear and wake up to practice at the cock’s cry.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

No one could tell these children have such aspirations.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Speak no more. Just show your best so you may ask the general to critique you.

LEI JUN & RUI-ZHU

[Speak]

As you order.

(Exeunt together)

DA-NIANG

[Toasting and speaks]

General and lady, cheers.

ZHANG DA & BI-NIANG

[Raising their cups and speak]

DA-NIANG, cheers.

(Drink wine)

(With the “Laak laak gu” percussion LEI JUN and RUI-ZHU enter together holding a spear and a sword accordingly)

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

The beautiful maiden is as capable as a bearded man.

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

From ancient times, heroes are made from youth.

RUI-ZHU

[Sings: “Tears of the Mountain and River”]

Seeing the mountains and rivers weep,

It is unbearable to view the full moon.

My sorrow flows like the unending Han River,

My grudge is as insatiable as the Eastern Ocean.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

**Warriors, shed no tears for the country,
It is intolerable to have your family lie on the barbarians' rugs.
Endless streams and mountains still in sight,
Two rivers and the hundred counties belonged to the Song's.**

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

Wiping my red mane horse,

LEI JUN

[Continues]

And sharpening my sword.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

Wiping out the barbarians,

LEI JUN

[Continues]

And riding out to recover the Central Plain.

LEI JUN & RUI-ZHU

[Sing together] (*Slightly faster*)

**Wiping out the barbarians,
And riding out to recover the Central Plain.**

(ZHANG DA and BI-NIANG *are impressed and applaud*)

ZHANG DA

[*Touched after hearing the song, steps forward and takes a good look at LEI JUN and RUI-ZHU, with the "Maan Dik Dik" percussion, recalls his painful recollections and speaks*]

Riding out to recover the Central Plain.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Men and women are grieving for the destroyed country,
Regretfully my youthful years had been wasted.
The elegy has moved my ardent heart and soul,
But who understands a hero's angst at a dead end.**

(*Deeply pained*)

BI-NIANG

[*Sees through the agenda, addresses DA-NIANG and speaks*]

DA-NIANG

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Jun is indeed an extraordinary talent,
RUI-ZHU is the wisest of all ladies.**

(Intently remonstrating ZHANG DA)

**Better than the roc that neither flies nor cries,
Standing aside as the barbarians invade the country.**

[To ZHANG DA, speaks]

General, these heroic children are a rare find in this world.

(IMPERIAL ENVOY and servants enter discreetly at this moment.)

ZHANG DA

[Responding casually and speaks]

Yes, a rare find indeed.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Steps forward and speaks] What

an exceptional meeting.

ZHANG DA

[Surprised upon seeing the IMPERIAL ENVOY and speaks]

DA-NIANG, who is this court official?

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

General, this is the IMPERIAL ENVOY, Wang. Here is the ZHANG DA couple.

ZHANG DA

[Upon hearing DA-NIANG, hastily speaks]

The IMPERIAL ENVOY? Tut!

[With facial expression of knowing the agenda, begrudgingly sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**I came here only to be the matchmaker,
And have no intentions to meet court officials.**

BI-NIANG

[To placate ZHANG DA, sings: Gwanfa upper line]

General, you have lost your wits.

Do not lose proper etiquette.

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Haugu]

General, I am sure you already know why the IMPERIAL ENVOY is here even without further explanations. Regrettably, His Majesty is afloat at sea and the situation is dire.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks: Haugu]

General, by imperial decree I came, to ask the general to lead Chaozhou warriors to uprising against the Yuan at once.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Haugu]

For three years the Chaozhou warriors had shed their blood fighting the Yuan, does His Majesty not know of it?

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks: Haugu]

The General is known far and wide for his loyalty and righteousness. His Majesty ordered me to bestow upon you a tunic and appeal for the general to rescue His Majesty without delay.

ZHANG DA

[*Still lingering with anger, speaks*]

Leading the mass to fight the Yuan, I have no objection. As to rescuing the emperor, I am afraid I must refuse.

[Sings: fast Chajiching lower line]

**Villagers are not strong enough to protect the country,
They can only use the hoe to plow the field.**

DA-NIANG

[*In persuasion, speaks*]

General.

[Sings: long Yiwong lower line]

**The general is a pillar that holds up the sky,
Our country's grievances are deeper than one's own personal grudges.
How could you bear to have the people dress like barbarians,
Know that the world is suffering.
Do not be discouraged,
Please pick up your sword again.
Do you not see that people's tears are seeping through the soil,
Enduring death and longing for peace.
May the general lead a strong army
To rescue the emperor and settle the barbarian's uprising.**

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

DA-NIANG, of course I know of the country's matters, yet I am determined to stay away from politics.
Please, no more talk of rescuing the emperor.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Why do you say so?

ZHANG DA

[*With hatred, speaks*]

DA-NIANG.

[Sings: Ba tone, Chatjiching lower line]

**The Yang generals made great contribution to the country,
Yet Qi-lang was murdered by the villain,
Their Liu-lang cannot even appeal for his brother.
Di Qing was wrongly accused of being a traitor,
And without the righteous Long Tu, his life would have been lost.
The name Yue Wu-mu symbolizes injustice.
Li Gang was banished even at age seventy.
As for me, I was banished despite having thrice rescued the emperor.
With countless cases of the Zhao emperors persecuting good officials,
My heart shivers upon hearing of the mission to rescue His Majesty.**

LEI JUN

[Speaks]

General, you are wrong.

[Sings: Chatjiching lower line]

**Back then, Minister Wen had been wrongly accused.
Though banished he never forgot his country's grief.
Upon being summoned, he joined the troops.
He never shied away from his duty to relieve the country.
A civil official fought the Yuan as head general.**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

May the general look at the big picture and forgive small grudges.

ZHANG DA

[*Touched upon hearing Jun's words, yet remains stubborn and speaks*]

Jun, you are young. What do you know about human affairs?

RUI-ZHU

[*In persuasion, speaks*]

General, Jun is right. Please think for the greater cause.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Saying has it that "At times of demise, one's conscience will surface,"
Better to be shattered jade than survive as a brick.
May one day the sword disperses the heavy clouds,
And we can see our beautiful country again.**

(ZHANG DA *feels pained at heart and attempts to turn away*)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

General.

[Sings: Chatjiching lower line]

With strong wind, one can see the strength of the grass.

In such chaotic time, loyalty surfaces.

We are not fighting solely for the Zhao family,

We are fighting for the Han race,

May you work for the public good,

And forget personal grudges.

Protect the Song's country

And restore the lineage to the Han people.

[Sings: Gwanfa]

How can you only think for yourself,

And let the Han lineage be destroyed.

ZHANG DA

[Unbearably, his will is moved and speaks]

My wife, if I was only thinking for myself, and have no heart for the country; why would I have thrice rescued the emperor? Though I might have the heart to serve my country, I am afraid the devious court officials will play tricks again.

ROYAL ENVOY

[Speaks]

Do not worry. The dowager concubine is attending to court affairs. She has rid the deceitful court officials, and rewarded the loyal ones. Please put on your armor and lead the troops to protect His Majesty.

ZHANG DA

[Shakes his head, heaves a sigh and sings: brisk Chatjiching lower line]

With only our fists and bare hands,

We cannot last for we are shorthanded.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

General.

[Continues to sing: Chatjiching lower line]

The "She" family troops have gathered around here.

Eight thousand strong is at your service.

ZHANG DA

[During interlude, speaks]

DA-NIANG, how can eight thousand men fight off the newly trained army of the barbarians?

LEI JUN

[Speaks]

General.

[Continues to sing: Chatjiching lower line]

Many tribal soldiers are spread out among the villages.

Let me gather them to join this cause.

[During interlude, speaks]

General, the tribal warriors live by the hillside and are ready to take arms as soon as we gather them. I guarantee that everyone will rise to your call. So do not worry about shortage of soldiers!

ZHANG DA

[Staggers and continues to sing: Chatjiching lower line]

Then who is going to protect our homes.

[Sings: Gwanfa]

The barbarians might attack during our absence.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

General! Without the father, there will be no son and without the country there will be no family.

[Sings: The sixth segment of "Night Moon in Xunyang"]

Do not worry about our home,

I shall protect it for you.

No need to worry for their attacks,

Just go fight as fierce as you can.

May you bring glory to the Han lineage.

DA-NIANG

[Continues]

Heroes during chaotic times,

All sworn to serve the country.

It is shameful to think of home.

Looking out at Yamen there are blood and tears.

I pray you general,

Lead the Han family troops with haste

And clear out the bandits.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

For the country we take up arms and kill our enemies,

I am willing to serve as vanguard in the battlefield.

RUI-ZHU

[Overjoyed and saddened, continues]

**Do not let your precious sword go to waste in a box.
The warrior can be useful to the country,
And for that I am delighted.
Girls will practice martial arts and protect our homes.
We shall train the female soldiers day and night.**

(Continuous background music to the dialogues)

ZHANG DA

[Upon hearing Jun's words, speaks]

Jun, you were about to marry RUI-ZHU, how do you bear to desert her for joining the troops before the wedding.

LEI JUN & RUI-ZHU

[Speak]

General, at this dire situation, the country is more important than family. We wish the general will give priority to the country as well.

BI-NIANG

[Takes the tunic and speaks]

General, please make the country your priority.

[Continues]

May you raise the righteous flag and whip your horse ahead of others.

(Kneels and offers the tunic)

(DA-NIANG, LEI JUN, RUI-ZHU and the IMPERIAL ENVOY all kneel down)

ZHANG DA

[With "Maan Dik Dik" percussion, slowly glances at everyone and looks at the tunic. Touched with the "Chong Yat Choi" percussion and sings: Jingsin, the last line of "Teasing Daji" as the lower line]

Aiyaya, how can one shed his responsibility.

[Sings: fast Maanbaan upper line without prelude]

To rescue the emperor, save the dire situation

And lead the troops north to reclaim the central plain.

[Sings: Ba tone, Gwanfa upper line without prelude]

As the general, I receive the order and humbly accept the tunic.

(Accepts the robe)

Saving the people and the country, I shall put my sword to trial again.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**The general is courageous and loyal, a rarity on earth,
And can single handedly turn the situation.
Thinking of the emperor trapped at Yamen,
May the flag of rebellion spread out along with the wind.**

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

Please do not worry. Jun, come over here. Go at once to summon all the volunteers to gather by the riverbank at noon tomorrow, and await orders for departure with no exception.

(LEI JUN accepts the order and exit)

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

My wife, I must return first to prepare everything and shall leave it to you and DA-NIANG to entertain the IMPERIAL ENVOY.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

General, do not worry. I shall take care of this personally.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

In this case I bid my farewell.

(Exit)

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks: Haugu]

I am able to complete the imperial order, only due to the help of Lady Zhang and DA-NIANG. Your words were righteous and dignified. Our country is blessed. Delighted that the general will raise the flag of righteousness and all volunteers will join.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks: Haugu]

Your Excellency, let us drink in the inner hall and toast to the restoration the golden goblet in advance.

DA-NIANG

[*Smiles and sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

With no delicacy in this poor countryside,

Hope you do not mind the crude meals and flavorless wine.

[*Speaks*]

Your Excellency, after you.

(*Exeunt together*)

CURTAIN

Annotations on ACT 1

1. "Island of Farewell" (Cilangzhou) literally means "the island where one bids farewell to one's husband," originally named Haizhou, is in present day Shantou City of Guangdong Province. The name Cilangzhou came from the poem Chen BI-NIANG composed as she bade farewell to her husband ZHANG DA at Haizhou in 1277 A. D.
2. "Utopia" is the English equivalent of Tao Hua Yuan (literally "Peach Blossom Spring,") the Chinese concept of an idealistic society.
3. Bianliang (present day Kaifeng City of Henan Province) was the capital during the Northern Song Dynasty.
4. The "Northern Barbarians" is a general term that refers to the enemies and invaders from the many tribes that resided north of the Central Plain. In this opera, this term refers to the army of the Yuan Dynasty.
5. Central Plain literally means "the centre of the world," and refers to the geographic area around the Yellow River and is considered the origin of the Han race.
6. Phoenix Mountain (in present day Chaozhou City of Guangdong Province) was the origin of the "She" tribe. In this opera, XU DA-NIANG, her family and other villagers all belong to the "She" tribe.
7. "Thousands of whips thrown into the river can halt the river flow" derived from the Chinese idiom, "Throw in whips to block the stream." This saying came from King Fu Jian, who proudly boasted the number of his soldiers by saying, "If they all throw their horsewhips into the Yangtze River, the river flow would be blocked." It is used to describe a large and powerful army.
8. Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368 A. D.) was established by Kublai Khan of the Mongolian clan after he invaded the Southern Song Dynasty of China. It is the first foreign dynasty to rule all of China for almost a hundred years.
9. ZHANG DA (? - 1279 A. D.) was born in Raoping County (in present day Guangdong Province.) Towards the end of Southern Song Dynasty, he was the Military Governor of Chaozhou and died in the Naval Battle of Mount Ya in 1279 A. D.
10. CHEN BI-NIANG (? - 1279 A. D.) was the wife of ZHANG DA. She wrote a poem upon bidding farewell to her husband at Haizhou, thus Haizhou is also known as Cilangzhou.

11. DA-NIANG mentioned that her daughter has "come of age." In ancient Chinese custom, coming of age for a girl is when she reaches fifteen years old. At that time, her hair will be bound at the back of the head and secure by a hairpin, thus also known literally as reaching the "year of the hairpin."
12. Good choice as son-in-law (literally the choice of the eastern bench) is a Chinese idiom used to describe an eligible son-in-law. Chi Jian from Eastern Jin Dynasty chose his daughter's husband by picking out the man who lay casually on a bench in the eastern chamber among others who were pretentious. Thus, the term "eastern bench" also generally refers to a son-in-law.
13. "Ai" is the onomatopoeia of a sigh.
14. Xiang Ping was a man from Han Dynasty who believed in simple living and high thinking. His greatest wish in life is to arrange marriage for his children. After he found his son a wife and married off his daughter, he exclaimed, "I have finished all that I need to do," and then took off to travel without ever returning home.
15. Mandarin ducks are metaphors for lovers in Chinese culture.
16. You Ji (? - 559 B. C.) was a legendary archer from the Kingdom of Chu. Legend has it that he could shoot through a willow leaf from a hundred steps away.
17. Zu Di (266-321 A. D.) was a man from Jin Dynasty, who led an army to defend the invasion of the northern barbarians at his time. His determination and aspirations were admired throughout history.
18. Dragon Spring Sword is a name of a famous sword commissioned by the King of Chu and cast by two legendary swords maker Ou Zhi (ancestor of swords making in ancient China) and Gan Jiang during the Spring and Autumn Period.
19. "A man of age should marry" is the first half of a Chinese proverb, followed by "A woman of age should be married off." It is used to give advice to men and women of age to form a family.
20. "I lost my parents when I was young" (literally "losing support and reliance at a young age") is a Chinese term meaning losing one's father and mother at a young age. This term loosely classifies the role of a father as support and the role of a mother as reliance.
21. "The northern barbarians have not been defeated, how can one think of forming a family?" was spoken by Han General Huo Qu-bing in response to the Han Emperor's intention to build him a mansion.
22. DA-NIANG mentioned that LEI JUN has reached twenty years old. In ancient Chinese custom, a boy reaching the age of twenty would go through a capping ceremony to signify his coming of age. It is literally called reaching the year of "Weak Cap."
23. "The courtesy of husband and wife" (literally "presenting the tray with both hands raised to the height of one's eyebrow") is a Chinese idiom referring to the kind of respect a man and his wife should share among themselves. It is also generally used to describe a loving married couple.

24. Liang Hong-yu (1102-1135 A. D.) was the wife of Southern Song General Han Shi-zhong. She herself was a known heroine of her time and was most famous for assisting her husband's victory against the Jin army during the Battle of Huang Tian Dang by beating the war drum.
25. The Jin Dynasty (1115-1234 A. D.) was established by the Nuzhen tribe from the Northeast of China. After extinguishing the Liao Dynasty, they began invading Northern Song, eventually forcing the Song Emperor to move south and thus the Southern Song Dynasty was established.
26. Raoping County is located in eastern Guangdong Province under the jurisdiction of Chaozhou City.
27. "Fairy bird" (literally "blue bird") refers to the mythical bird messenger for the Fairy Mother Goddess.
28. Old maid (literally "two buns on the sides hairstyle") is a Chinese metaphor for unmarried woman or a virgin. Traditionally only children would wear such a hairstyle.
29. "A woman of age should be married off" is a Chinese proverb. See annotation no. 19.
30. Crimson heart and jade blood are Chinese metaphors for greatest loyalty till death. Legend has it that Chang Hong from Zhou Dynasty was a loyal court official who was unjustly killed and his blood turned into jade after three years of his death.
31. The "bandits" here refers to the Northern barbarians/Yuan army.
32. Yellow is the color for Chinese emperors. Here it means returning the country to the Song Emperor's rule.
33. Yamen (presently located in Jiangmen City of Guangdong Province) was the location for a critical battle between Southern Song and Yuan, named the Naval Battle of Mount Ya. The Song troops were crushed which ultimately led to the end of the Southern Song Dynasty.
34. Chaozhou is located by the lower stretch of Han River, present day northeast part of Shantou City in Guangdong Province.
35. "As long as we have General Fei of the Lulong City" is the third line from a famous poem written by Wang Chang-ling from Tang dynasty. General Fei refers to Li Guang, a legendary general of the Western Han Dynasty, who was famous for battling the northern barbarians of his time. Lulong City (present day Lulong County of Hebei Province) was where Li Guang stationed. The IMPERIAL ENVOY compares General ZHANG DA to Li Guang.
36. Beacon fire is a war signal used in ancient times.
37. "Matchmaker" (literally "old man under the moon") is the Chinese god of marriage. According to folktales, he matches couples by tying their legs together with his magical red strings. Generally refers to anyone who act as a matchmaker.
38. "Feast of Hongmen" is a Chinese metaphor for any gathering with a treacherous agenda or murderous scheme.

39. "Playing with an ax in front of Lu Ban" is a Chinese idiom referring to someone boasting his skills in front of a master. Lu Ban, a carpenter/engineer from the Spring and Autumn Period, is considered the ancestor of Chinese carpentry.
40. "Sleeping on a spear awaiting orders" is a Chinese idiom describing one who is determined to kill the enemies by sleeping with the weapon by one's side and be ready to take up arms to fight at anytime.
41. "Waking up at the cock's cry to practice" is a Chinese idiom describing someone who is diligent at practicing one's skill. During the Jin Dynasty, Zu Di and Zhang Kun were such good friends they shared the same bed. One evening in the middle of the night, they were woken up by a cock's cry. Zhang Kun thought that it was an omen, but Zu Di said, "It is not an omen. It only means we should get up earlier to practice". Thus the two of them got out of bed and practice sword fighting till dawn.
42. "Mountain and river" is a Chinese metaphor for the country.
43. Han River is in the eastern part of Guangdong Province, the largest river in the area.
44. "My grudge is as insatiable as the Eastern Ocean" derived from the Chinese idiom, "Jing Wei filling the sea." According to ancient Chinese mythology, the Emperor of the Sun (Yan Di) had a daughter named Nu Wa. One day she drowned and died while swimming in the Eastern Ocean. Her spirit turned into a Jing Wei bird and vowed to avenge her death by filling up the Eastern Ocean. Every day the bird flew back and forth bringing earth from the mountain to drop into the Eastern Ocean in hope of filling it up some day. This idiom is used as a metaphor for one's persistency and determination.
45. "Two rivers and the hundred counties belonged to the Song's" is a line from a poem by Lu You, a famous patriotic poet from Song Dynasty. Song Dynasty was established by Zhao Kuang-yin in 960 A. D. and his descendants ruled until 1279 A. D.
46. The "Yang generals" refers to the characters from the *Yang Family Saga*, a novel written based on Song General Yang Ye and his family. According to the novel the head of the family was General Yang Ji-ye and his wife She Sai-hua, was also a reputable female general. Together they had seven sons and two daughters, all of which were skilled and well trained in martial arts and war tactics. The Yang family was known for their patriotism but they also suffered injustice from the Song Emperor.
47. Qi-lang, the seventh son of Yang Ye, was murdered by their family's political enemy Pan Ren-mei.
48. Liu-lang, the sixth son of Yang Ye, was the only one who survived the battle of Jinsha Beach according to the novel. The Yang family's political enemy, Pan Ren-mei, plotted against them. Liu-lang appealed to the Song Emperor for his family's injustice but in vain.
49. Di Qing (1008-1057 A. D.) was a general of the Northern Song Dynasty.
50. Long Tu refers to Bao Zheng (999-1062 A. D.), a legendary government officer of the Song Dynasty. He was most well known for his extreme honesty and uprightness. He has become the symbol of justice in Chinese culture and there are many fictional stories about him.

51. Yue Wu-mu (1103-1142 A. D.), named Yue Fei, and posthumously dubbed Prince Wu-mu, a general of the Southern Song Dynasty famous for resisting the Jin invasion. He was unjustly accused by his political enemy and was executed. He has become the symbol of loyalty in Chinese culture.
52. Li Gang (1083-1140 A. D.) one of the four legendary court officers of the Southern Song Dynasty. He was most famous for his efforts in defending Song from Jin invasion.
53. "Age seventy" (literally "old and rare") derived from a poem written by Tang poet Du Fu, "It is rare that someone's life can reach seventy years old." The term "age of old and rare" is used to refer to someone turning seventy years old.
54. "Zhao Emperors" refers to all the emperors of the Song Dynasty, since they are all descendants of Zhao Kuang-yin.
55. Minister Wen, named Wen Tian-xiang (1236-1283 A. D.) famous court officer of the Southern Song Dynasty. As the Minister of the Right, he made a diplomatic visit to the Yuan army and was captured. He suffered much torturing but remained loyal to the Song Dynasty.
56. "At times of demise, one's conscience will surface" is a line from the *Song of Righteousness* written by Wen Tian-xiang.
57. "Han race" refers to the dominant ethnic group of China.
58. "'She' family troops" refers to troops from the "She" tribe.
59. "Golden goblet" is a Chinese metaphor for country.

ACT 2

(Part one outside of olio curtain)

[With a sword and a bag strapped to the back, MENG ZHONG enters using the "Running by the Side" formulaic movements]

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

People mourn for the remaining half of the country,
And are delighted to see a flag raised for the righteous cause.
My sword is unwilling to retire with me, It
transforms into a dragon even in its box.

[Speaks]

I am MENG ZHONG, summoned by brother LEI JUN to follow General ZHANG DA's mission to rescue the emperor. I have been sleeping on my spear waiting for orders. However my parents are old. They cannot bear to have me join the army and travel afar. (Slightly faster) Yet there will be no eggs left if the nest is overturned, and no family if the country is destroyed. So I left home to join the military rank and follow the army. Tomorrow at noon, the troop is set to depart. Hastily I keep walking, reporting to the troops in time.

[Speaks: Sibaak]

As it is that, loyalty to country and filial piety cannot co-exist,
Let sorrow looms over my sword and knitted brows.

[With "Ng Choi" percussion, sings: Gwanfa upper line]

Even without Chang-fang the ground can be shrunk. (Percussion)
Like the dragon soar and the tiger leap, I run as though I am flying. (Percussion)
Protecting the country, I vow to follow the general's lead.

(Walking a half "Circle Stage" in rapid steps to the "Laak Laak Gu" percussion, as MENG ZHONG enters concurrently).

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

Zhong, my son.

MENG ZHONG

[Sees MENG ZHAO, knowing it is unavoidable and speaks]

Father.

MENG ZHAO

[*Out of breath* and speaks]

My son Zhong, you seem to be in a rush, where do you intend to go?

(MENG ZHONG staggers)

MENG ZHAO

[*Knows the reason* and speaks]

Zhong, just say what you have to. There is no need to hesitate.

(MENG ZHONG *hesitates to speak*)

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

Zhong, saying has it that "A father knows his son more than anyone else." How would I not know your thoughts? You are joining the army. Why do you leave without bidding farewell?

MENG ZHONG

[*Kneels to explain* and speaks] Father.

MENG ZHAO

[*Cuts in* and speaks]

Zhong, are you worried that your parents will not allow you to leave home?

MENG ZHONG

[*Hesitates* and speaks] I...

MENG ZHAO

[Kindly speaks] My son

Zhong.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**I am old but I care about our country's demise,
Regrettably my corpse cannot be wrapped in horses' hides.
In vain, I look at the mountains and rivers in bloody tears,
Luckily my son inherits my ambition.**

MENG ZHONG

[*Delighted upon hearing MENG ZHAO's words* and speaks]

How great that father understands the principles of right and wrong. Please forgive your unfilial son.

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

Saying has it that "To be loyal to the country you cannot fulfill filial duty." I wish you success and the Han house will be restored soon.

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

Thank you, father, for your encouraging words.

WIFE OF MENG

[*Enters with the "Chung Tau" percussion and speaks*]

My son Zhong, my son Zhong.

(*Out of breath*)

MENG ZHONG

[*Hesitates to face her and speaks*]

Mother.

MENG ZHAO

[*Frowns upon seeing his wife and speaks*]

Old partner, what have you come for?

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

Zhong, you are our only child. How could we bear to let you join the troops and go far away?

MENG ZHAO

[*Comfortingly speaks*]

It is commendable that Zhong is determined to serve the country. You should let him go.

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

Mother, the emperor is in grave danger, and the country is at the brink of collapse. How can a high spirited man be apathetic? Forgive me mother, your son must put the country on higher priority.

MENG ZHAO

[*Pleased and speaks*]

Zhong is right.

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

Then you must go?

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

Your son must go.

WIFE OF MENG

[*Heart-broken* and speaks]

If you have made up your mind, then even your mother cannot keep you. However, the troop is seriously outnumbered. How will you battle?

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

Alas! Back then, the Kingdom of Chu, even with only three families left would vow to end the Kingdom of Qin. Even ten thousand strong cannot fight a man that defies death. What does a woman like you know?

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

Old muddle head, you keep saying I do not know. Fine! So I do not. Yet when our son is gone, who will attend to us?

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

Then I shall take care of you and you care for me.

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

Who will look after our farm and home?

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

I tend the farm and you tend the house.

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

Oh! What if one of us... one of us...

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

Hey! Birth, aging, sickness, and death are inevitable. If you go first, I will bury you. If I go first, you will bury me.

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

What if we die together, then what?

MENG ZHAO

[Impatiently speaks]

You are the real old muddle head! If we die together, then it is as merry as it can be. Neither of us needs to worry.

(To MENG ZHONG)

Zhong, it is getting dark and you had better get on your way. There is no time to waste.

MENG ZHONG

[Cannot bear to see his heart-broken mother and speaks]

Mother.

WIFE OF MENG

[Suppressing her grief and speaks]

Ai! My son, you may go, you may go!

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

In that case, your son humbly takes off.

[Sings: Faaidim lower line]

**It is most heart wrenching at this time of parting,
I take leave as I bid you farewell.**

[Speaks]

Father, mother, take care!

(Exit)

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

All right, very well. Do not be so miserable. The troop is taking off tomorrow. Let us both go see them off.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Do not shed any tears in front of the troops,
I shall encourage our son to be loyal and righteous.**

(Exuent)

(Olio curtain rises)

(Under the forest shades by the riverbank, a giant tree hangs by stage right with a contractible arrow. A small step placed by the tree for later use.)

(Eight soldiers enter and spread out on both sides)

(LEI JUN and MENG ZHONG enter from stage right and left concurrently)

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

As strong as the army of Piao-yao,

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

As powerful as a troop of a million-strong.

LEI JUN

[Speaks]

Attention all troops, this is the first round of drumming. The general will be here shortly and we shall wait by the riverbank.

ALL SOLDIERS

[Speaks]

As you order.

ZHANG DA

[Enters using the "Examining Armor" formulaic movements and speaks]

Recruiting far and wide for the cause to uphold the Song's house.

Drumming up thunderous sound for it is time for uprising.

LEI JUN & MENG ZHONG

[Pay respect and speak]

General, we pay respect to you.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

My two vanguards, have all troops gathered?

LEI JUN & MENG ZHONG

[Speak]

All gathered for a while.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

Great!

[Sings: Faaidim upper line]

The reinforcements will travel as fast as the shooting stars.

There will be no delay in rescuing the emperor.

[Sings: Gwanfa]

Leading the troops straight to Yamen,

We vow to avenge the disgrace of the Xuanhe Jingkang era.

SERGEANT

[Enters with the "Chung Tau" percussion to report and speaks]

Reporting to the general, Lady BI-NIANG and DA-NIANG, along with everyone from the tribal villages are here to see the troops off. We await the general's orders.

ZHANG DA

[With much regret and pain, speaks]

They are here!

LEI JUN & MENG ZHONG

[Look up and speak]

They are here.

(Music begins, prelude to "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles")

(ZHANG DA, LEI JUN and MENG ZHONG *look afar as the prelude plays.*)

(Chorus sings off, sounding from far to near: Faansin, "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles")

A farewell party for the travelers

With sounds of autumn breeze accompanying the armor.

Though the wine is light,

We shall drink up upon your return.

(BI-NIANG, DA-NIANG, RUI-ZHU, MENG ZHONG, WIFE OF MENG *and others enter during the chorus*)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

General.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

My wife.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

General, you are leading this volunteer troop to rescue the emperor and restore the Song's house. We have prepared a feast in honour of your departure.

(Village girl enters with wine on a tray)

BI-NIANG

[Picks up the wine cup and continues to sing: "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles"]

With this wine, I encourage my husband,

Wishing you to fight ahead of the emperor.

Kill the barbarians as you mount your horse,

**And write military reports as you dismount.
Send out news of victories,
And we shall reunite in peaceful time.**

ZHANG DA

[*Accepts the wine and speaks*]

My wife, your words are deep and meaningful. Your husband will not disappoint you.

(*Drinks up*)

DA-NIANG

[*Also picks up a wine cup and speaks*]

General, let me offer you a cup as well.

[*Continues to sing*]

**Though there is no Zong Ze as you cross the river,
We have a Yue Fei to rescue the emperor.
General, you are a pillar that upholds heaven,
Our country is bound to recover in time.**

(*Offering wine*)

ZHANG DA

[*Accepts the wine and speaks*]

Thank you, DA-NIANG.

(Music begins: "Faa Pei Ting")

ZHANG DA

[*Sings: Faaiban lower line*]

**Obligated to save the country and the people,
Even an old horse never gives up running far and wide.**

(*Drinks up during music interlude*)

Wearing my armour once again,

[*Ending with "Bao Choi" percussion and sings: Baa tone, Gwanfa without prelude*]

**Delighted to see eight thousand strong to the rescue,
Vowing to live and die together for our aspirations.**

(Background Faansin music to dialogues)

BI-NIANG

[*Speaks*]

To our uncles and brothers.

LEI JUN, MENG ZHONG and OTHER SOLDIERS

[*Speak*]

My Lady.

BI-NIANG

[Sings: "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles"] (Slightly faster)

**The troops will frighten both gods and demons,
And the enemies run to hide upon hearing you all.
A cup of wine for encouragement,
May the victorious tunes be played as you return home.**

(Offering wine)

LEI JUN, MENG ZHONG and OTHER SOLDIERS

[Speak]

Thank you, my lady.

DA-NIANG

[To RUI-ZHU, speaks]

RUI-ZHU, go and offer wine to your brother LEI JUN.

RUI-ZHU

[Suppressing her sadness, picks up a cup and speaks]

Brother Jun.

LEI JUN

[Holds RUI-ZHU's hand and speaks]

Sister Zhu.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues to sing]

**Though our love is endearing,
Do not let it affect your heroic ambition.
Wishing you victory in killing the enemies,
And return soon so we may enter into wedlock.**

(Offering wine)

LEI JUN

[Accepts with gratitude and speaks]

Sister Zhu.

[Continues]

**It is a man's job to protect the country,
A hero will not let his youth go to waste.
I shall test out my sword in the battlefield,
And you should read more poems by Lu You at home.**

MENG ZHAO

[*Steps forward* and speaks]

The general will turn the table around, but this old man cannot follow to kill the enemies. Luckily my son will carry on my life ambition, and wear the armour in place of me.

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

The day the rebellious flag is raised, the country is to be restored at this moment.

ZHANG DA

[*Touched* and speaks]

Old hero, you have taught your son well. I rely on everyone's collaboration as I lead the troops to rescue the emperor.

MENG ZHAO, WIFE OF MENG and OTHER VILLAGERS

[Sing]

**May you slay the barbarians in one battle,
We shall warm the wine and await your return.**

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

Thank you.

[Sings: Faansin Gwanfa lower line]

**Our grand ambition shall be fed by the barbarian's flesh,
In time, we shall fly the Han's flag on our land again.
We will not stop until we kill the barbarians.
All arms raised in calls for action.**

DA-NIANG

[*Takes a wine cup* and speaks]

Let us all drink to Vanguard Meng and all other heroes.

[Sings: Reprise of "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles," in slower tempo]

**Rivers and mountains filled with blood and tears.
What a pitiful sight of a war-torn country.
Avenge our country's grievances today,
Our good men shall not go to waste.**

MENG ZHONG

[*Accepts the wine and, with other soldiers, speaks*]

Thank you, DA-NIANG.

EVERYONE

[Continues to sing]

**We follow suit to slay the enemies,
Defying death to serve the country.
A man is shamed for being anonymous,
With no achievements to be recorded in history.**

(Sound of war drums)

LEI JUN & MENG ZHONG

[Speak]

General, this is the second round of drumming.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Nimbaak]

Each round of drumming hastens our departure.
It is time for us to head out to the edge of the world.

BI-NIANG, DA-NIANG, MENG ZHAO, WIFE OF MENG and OTHER VILLAGERS

[Speak: Nimbaak]

Wishing for your return with success,
We anticipate washing the horses and undressing your armor at Haizhou.

ZHANG DA

[Emotionally speaks]

To all dear villagers, ZHANG DA's journey will not be a disappointment to the country.

(To LEI JUN)

Jun, bring on the bow and arrow.

(LEI JUN *hands over the bow and arrow*)

[*Accepts the bow and arrow*, and speaks]

My wife.

[Sings: Faansin Jungbaan lower line]

**The hero's heart is encouraged after the wine.
My archery skill is not weakened by the wind,
I wish to say my parting words through this arrow.
Vowing to serve the country till death,
Waste not my youth,
It is better to die in the battlefield than in bed.
Roaring waves at Yamen,
Dark clouds cover the land of Han,
Our nests in danger within the storm,
Do not be clingy as we leave.**

(Sings faster)

**Holding an arrow on the bow,
The shooting arrow signifies my unyielding ambition.
Like us warriors that cannot be restrained,
Only heaven will know the fruit of our journey.**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

**The day of our victorious return, I shall retrieve this arrow,
And look over the marks on this tree trunk.**
(Shoots out the arrow)

BI-NIANG

[*Grieved and aside sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

**His determination is as unwavering as a shot out arrow,
I fear we may not meet again after this.
Yet I must not shed any sorrowful tears.**

(Percussion interlude)

[*Suppressing sorrow, continues to sing: Gwanfa, remaining half of the upper line*]

I shall not put private feelings over public interest.
(Discreetly wipes off tears)

ZHANG DA

[*Sees the situation, steps forward to comfort BI-NIANG and speaks*]

My wife.

BI-NIANG

[*Forces a smile to hide her feelings and speaks*]

The general has shown his determination to march forward courageously with a shooting arrow, and it is most respectable. I have a humble keepsake to give you.

(Music plays prelude)

BI-NIANG

[*Sings: Yilau lower line*]

**Using the sword blade,
(Drawing the sword as she sings)
To cut my hair.
*(Cuts off hair as she sings)***

ZHANG DA & DA-NIANG

[*During interlude, speaks*]

My wife/ Lady.

BI-NIANG

[*Holding a bunch of hair, during interlude speaks*]
General.

[Continues to sing]

**The love of knotted hair surpasses life and death,
And you will know my feelings through these hair strands.
The strands of hair will connect us even worlds apart,
Like shapes and shadows never depart.
If you are to be martyred,
(Overwhelmed, unable to speak)**

RUI-ZHU and others

[Continue]

We vow to follow suit and kill the barbarians.

ZHANG DA

[*Touched, accepts the hair strands* and speaks]

My wife.

[Sings: Hoche Gwanfa lower line]

**Born during chaotic times in this life,
The people's deadly sufferings will not be in vain.**

(Background music: One segment of "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles" to dialogues)

RUI-ZHU

[*Steps forward* and speaks]

Brother Jun.

LEI JUN

[Speaks]

Sister Zhu.

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks]

Brother Jun.

(*"Yat Choi" percussion*)

LEI JUN

[*Grieved* and speaks]

Sister Zhu, as I engage in this journey, my life is uncertain. Though we have tender feelings for each other, we can only look forward to the day of my return.

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks]

Brother Jun, I always read Lu Fang-weng's poems and know that it is a warrior's duty to die in a

battle, and is shameful to stick with his wife and children. You are leaving today with no set date for our reunion. My heart is yours and will not waver. Thus, in front of the troops, I ask the ZHANG DA couple to be our matchmaker, and let us be wedded as husband and wife. Even if you do not return, I vow to stay your widow for life.

DA-NIANG

[Speaks]

Such powerful feelings! RUI-ZHU, I am proud to have you as my daughter. I humbly ask the general and his wife to be their matchmaker.

(Everyone should pay attention to their own reactions for the above dialogues)

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

Jun, to have such a companion, your life is without regret. As the troops are about to leave amidst the sounding of the war horn, you and RUI-ZHU will kowtow to heaven and earth, and become husband and wife. (*Sounding sorrowful as he speaks to this line*) Once we return from war, you two may consummate the marriage. Beat the drums and blow the war horn.

(Background music: "Travel of Ten Thousand Miles" to above dialogues)

(Sounding of war horn)

(Background music to the marriage ceremony)

(Two drummings)

(LEI JUN and RUI-ZHU kowtow to heaven and earth)

LEI JUN

[*Revealing true sentiments, speaks*]

RUI-ZHU, my wife.

RUI-ZHU

[*Overjoyed and grieved, speaks*]

Jun, my husband.

(Sound of war drums)

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

General, this is the third round of drumming.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

It is already the third round of drumming. I thank my wife and all dear villagers to come see us off.

Raise our flag, and send orders to all troops. We take off immediately with no exceptions. Fetch my horse.

(SERGEANT *accepts the order and raises the flag*)

(*With the "Sei Gu Tau" percussion, ZHANG DA mounts the horse*)

CHORUS

[Immediately continue to sing]

**As the troops vehemently swallow the barbarians,
The warriors fervently sing and raise the flag of rebellion.
Vowing not to return without defeating Loulan,
And to retrieve our country of million generations.
Vowing not to return without defeating Loulan,
And to retrieve our country of million generations.**

(Sound of thunderous war drums)

(*Exuent ZHANG DA, LEI JUN, MENG ZHONG and others Soldiers*)

(BI-NIANG, DA-NIANG, RUI-ZHU and OTHER VILLAGERS *look afar*)

(*Lights dim*)

(*Valiant background music reduces to softer music*)

(Chorus sings off: Faansin, brisk tempo)

**Eight thousand strong head off to rescue the emperor.
Months went by with a blink of an eye.
With no reports of victory nor returning sail,
Awaiting news from the edge of the world.**

(*Lights up gradually as chorus sing until the last line with sunrise effect on the sky drop*)

(*Fisher girl YIN-JIAO enters discreetly with back towards audience gazing afar*) (*Flute plays solo*)

(*Orchestra joins in*)

(*Percussion accompanies using big drum and the "civil" gong*)

(*YIN-JIAO turns around facing audience during the flute solo, walks downstage in disappointment, turns around again during percussion and heaves a sigh*)

YIN-JIAO

[Sings: Yifaan long Yiwong without prelude]

Waiting anxiously for the troops day and night at Haizhou,

**Men and women are grieved by the disgrace of losing our country,
The autumn wind sent the warriors off to journey,
Winter is here but there is no sign of their return.
Sadly there is not a word of news,
Gazing West towards Yaxi, our clothes are drenched in tears.**

[Sings: Yifaan Yiwong upper line]

**Though I am not as strong as Hong-yu,
Nor am I as domineering as Mu-lan,
Though an orphan girl,
I know enough to care about the country's affairs.**

[Speaks: Haugu]

I am YIN-JIAO, orphaned at a young age, I make a living by fishing. Yet I know that even ordinary people are responsible for the country's rise and fall. Currently our country is suffering, and General ZHANG DA has led the troops to rescue the emperor. For months, there has been no news. The lady stands by the riverbank day and night, barely sleeping or eating. So I come every morning at dawn, gazing out by the river in hope of getting some news so as to give comfort to the lady and the villagers.

[Speaks: Sibaak]

Ai! The river merges out to the ocean,
Still no news about the return from any snow goose.

(Walks upstage to the backdrop with back towards audience and gazes out)

(Music plays the Maanbaan prelude as RUI-ZHU, with a bow strapped to her back, accompanies BI-NIANG to enter)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Sigung Maanbaan lower line]

**Staying at home for months,
Training troops and practicing martial arts.
The first batch of troops went off to Yaxi,
And women take up the responsibility to secure our homes.
Day and night, I wait for the warriors,
As the snow goose got lost amidst the smoke on the battlefield.
Facing the roaring waves in sorrow,
There seems to be a bloody storm ahead.**

[Music interlude to dialogue and speaks]

Ai! Dreaming of the road to Yaxi, it is vexing that there has been no letters at all.

(Feels anxious and worried)

RUI-ZHU

[Thinking of Jun, continues to sing: Maanbaan lower line]

Wishing to follow the moonlight to Yamen,

**Even the arrow cannot deliver my letter.
Suffering insomnia worrying for the country,
My brows knitted thinking of the warrior.**
(Both walk towards the seaside)

YIN-JIAO
[Upon seeing the two, steps forward to greet and speaks]
Greetings to you, my lady and sister RUI-ZHU.

BI-NIANG
[Speaks: Haugu]
YIN-JIAO, it is so good of you to come here and wait for news every morning at dawn. (*"Yat Choi"*
Percussion accompanies sad expressions) Ai! How come there is no news at all? I am getting concerned.

YIN-JIAO
[Speaks: Haugu]
Oh yes. (*Seeing BI-NIANG's grief with "Jak Choi" percussion, wishes to comfort BI-NIANG*) Well,
maybe... maybe someone like Hong-qiao lost the letters, I believe the troops will return soon in victory.
[Speaks]
Do not worry, my lady.

RUI-ZHU
[In sorrow, speaks: Haugu]
My lady, my heart jumps and I have been having nightmares. I am afraid the troops might have been
extinguished. (*In grief*)

BI-NIANG
[Suppressing despair, speaks: Haugu]
RUI-ZHU, when the general took on the mission, he has given up his family. Killing enemies in the
battlefield, he has given up himself, even if he died for the country, (*"Yat Choi" percussion*) it is a man's
duty. When the troops took off, we have said that if they were martyred, we vow to follow suit and kill
the barbarians.

*(With "Chung Yat Choi" percussion, fisher girl and RUI-ZHU were saddened, and RUI-ZHU almost burst out
crying. YIN-JIAO signals RUI-ZHU to hold her tears)*

YIN-JIAO
[Forcing a smile and speaks]
My lady.

[Sings: "Gracilaria Tune"]

**The general is loyal and wise,
Fighting the barbarians with his bow and arrow,
Once he wins he will send news.**

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

**Everytime I read Fang-weng's poems,
I got more worried.
Closing the book in tears,
News is sparse and the journey is worlds apart.**

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

**With the warriors gone, burdening our worries.
Afraid that the villagers will inquire of their return. (*Deeply worried*)**

*(Sound of wild goose played by the flute) (Background
music until the end of dance movements)*

YIN-JIAO

[*Pointing out towards the sky and speaks*]

My lady, there is a wild goose flying towards us!

(All three of them gaze out together)

BI-NIANG

[*With "Maan dik dik" percussion, thinks and speaks*]

Winter has not passed and the northern goose is flying south. How can a goose from the North bring news
from Yaxi?

RUI-ZHU

[*Snorts and speaks: Haugu*]

Those awful geese all fly from North to South, not even one come from the West. How frustrating.

YIN-JIAO

[*Looks up and speaks*]

Alas! My lady, the goose is turning around!

(All three of them look out and then they look again to make sure)

(“Hoi been” percussion as the three of them follows the wild goose flying across stage, it is best to have the set designer to design the visual route of the goose)

BI-NIANG

[Disappointed and sings: Gwanfa upper line]

Ai! No news tied to its legs. It just takes off flying past the edge of the ocean.

(Saddened and disappointed)

RUI-ZHU

[Angered, makes a snort and speaks]

Hey!

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**My thoughts cannot be delivered by the wind,
And that lone goose teased my sorrowful mind.
Carrying no news from the edge of the ocean,
It only arouses the lady’s distress.**

[Speaks]

I shall arch my bow and shoot it down, to appease my anger.

(Arches the bow and shoot)

(Background music to dialogues)

BI-NIANG

[Attempts to stop RUI-ZHU and speaks]

Hush, RUI-ZHU, you...

(RUI-ZHU re-strapped the bow, still irritated)

YIN-JIAO

[Points toward the ocean and speaks]

My lady, there is a boat from afar, sailing closer towards us.

(Background music to above dialogues)

(BI-NIANG and RUI-ZHU gaze out together)

RUI-ZHU

[Overjoyed and speaks]

It looks like Jun is back!

YIN-JIAO

[Speaks]

Sister RUI-ZHU, it is not brother LEI JUN. It is brother MENG ZHONG.

(Fast Jungbaan percussion intercepts)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Saapjiching lower line]

**Upon seeing him my knitted brows slightly relaxed,
Seeing the reflection of the sail among the waves.
As I am thinking of the warriors that left with no news,
Here comes MENG ZHONG from the battlefield.
Gazing out, seeing the bamboo punting pole.**

RUI-ZHU & YIN-JIAO

[Sing]

The bamboo punting pole gets closer to the riverbank.

BI-NIANG

[Pleased, speaks during interlude]

RUI-ZHU, YIN-JIAO, MENG ZHONG is walking over. (Speak in faster tempo)

(MENG ZHAO, WIFE OF MENG, JIN-XI and fisherwomen enter)

MENG ZHAO

[To BI-NIANG, happily speaks]

My lady, our son Zhong is coming back!

WIFE OF MENG

[During interlude, speaks]

Old muddle head, don't you think the lady knows?

(MENG ZHAO, being cut short by his wife, is irritated)

BI-NIANG

[During interlude, speaks]

Old couple, your son Zhong has returned. We should all be happy.

(Music plays continuously, gradually changes to slower tempo)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Gwanfa upper line without prelude]

**The parents of Haizhou await the warriors,
And are overjoyed that good news came from heaven.**

MENG ZHONG

[With the "Chung Tau" percussion enters carrying a letter, pays respect to BI-NIANG and speaks]

My lady, I pay respect to you.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

At ease.

MENG ZHONG

[Turns back and see MENG ZHAO and WIFE OF MENG, speaks in surprise]

Father, mother.

MENG ZHAO

[Showing self-importance of the aged, speaks]

Zhong, are the general and others all doing well?

MENG ZHONG

[Staggers and speaks] ...

Doing well.

BI-NIANG

[Concerned and speaks]

Good nephew Meng, what news do you bring from the front?

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks: Haugu]

Reporting to my lady. When we first arrived, we were victorious. With eight thousand strong, knowing that the enemies are not good with water, so we hooked onto their gunwales to attack, and punctured holes on their boat bottoms. That traitor ZHANG HONG-FAN was trodden.

BI-NIANG

[In haste, speaks]

Nephew Meng, where is the emperor's vessel now?

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

Still at Yamen.

BI-NIANG

[Inquiring again, speaks]

And our troops?

MENG ZHONG

[Answers and speaks]

Also in the ocean, on a boat.

BI-NIANG

[Shocked and speaks]

Alas, that is bad!

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

Why do you say so, lady?

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Engaging the enemies with interconnected vessels on the ocean,
Consequences are dire as they get isolated.
Stuck with no way out,
Without food or water they are trapped till death claims them.**

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

Ai! My lady, it was just as you predicted. The general has a letter for you, please read it.

(Hands over the letter)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Let me have a look.

[Receives the letter and reads]

When we first arrived we were victorious. However, the traitor Zhang Hong-fan contrived a devious scheme. He led the bandits to encircle the Mount of Ya by land and sea. The emperor's vessel is trapped with no food supply. (Slightly faster) Thirst cannot be quenched by seawater, and horses are being slain for food. The army is isolated and helpless, and we are in severe condition. Send help upon reading this without delay.

(Exasperated and worried)

(Everyone feels uncertain and angered)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: "Single Hand Cannot Clap"]

**My body is drenched in cold sweat.
In short, the emperor's vessel will be in grave danger.
Yet I am worried the aged and weak village troops cannot make it.
How do I provide support with a single hand.**

(Slowing down)

My heart trembles and this is vexing.

(Extremely anxious)

JIN-XI

[Speaks]

My lady.

[Sings: Chatjiching lower line]

**Even fisherwomen are eager to serve the country.
Though we are not used to pulling the bow and shooting arrows,
We can cook and be helpful to any commands.
Plus, we are very used to travelling on water.**

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

My lady.

[Continues to sing: Chatjiching lower line]

**This old general's spirit is still strong,
Comparable to my youthful time.
General Fu Bo was able to invade the Kingdom of Jiaozhi,
I shall learn from such good example.**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

**Before my knife blade turns blunt,
Let us kill the enemies to fulfill my life ambition,**

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

My lady. Though this old woman is weak, I can steer the wheel for the ship. My sail can withstand wind from all directions, and I sail on sea as steady as travelling on land.

YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI and FISHERWOMEN

[Speaks: Haugu]

My lady, we fisherwomen travel among wind and waves and we shall not be bullied by the ocean.

BI-NIANG

[*Touched* and sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**BI-NIANG shall shoulder the burden,
I thank you all for taking up the task to rescue the emperor.**

[Ends with "Saam Choi" percussion and speaks]

RUI-ZHU, come over here. Ride to Phoenix Mountain and tell DA-NIANG. Give orders to all remaining tribal troops East of Guangzhou to attack Huizhou and Guangzhou, to restrain the enemies.
Return immediately after completion of this task.

RUI-ZHU

[*Accepts the order* and speaks]

I shall obey your order.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Good nephew Meng. After you feed yourself, cross the ocean immediately and send news to Yamen. Tell them BI-NIANG's reinforcements will arrive shortly.

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

As you order.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

All dear villagers go home to pack and await orders to depart without delay.

MENG ZHAO, WIFE OF MENG, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI and FISHERWOMEN

[*Accept order and speak*]

We understand.

(Music effect)

CURTAIN

Annotations of ACT 2

1. Fei Chang-fang was a Daoist practitioner in the Eastern Han Dynasty. He retreated into the mountains to meditate hoping to achieve enlightenment but in vain. Legend has it that he could heal any sickness, whip the hundred ghosts and command the God of Earth. People had seen him appear in several locations that are over a thousand miles apart within one day, thus he was said to possess the magical power of shortening distances for his travel by shrinking the ground.
2. "Corpses wrapped in horses' hides" is a Chinese idiom implying the determination to fight in a war even till death.
3. "The Kingdom of Chu, even with only three families left would vow to end the Kingdom of Qin" refers to a story recorded in the Book of History written by Sima Qian of Western Han Dynasty, implying that with determination even the minority could win.
4. Huo Piao-yao (140-117B.C.), also named Huo Qu-bing, was a legendary general of Han Dynasty. He led a powerful army and fought victorious battles with the northern barbarians of his time.
5. "The disgrace of Xuanhe Jingkang era" refers to the Jingkang Incident, also known as the Humiliation of Jingkang that took place in 1127 A.D. The Jin Dynasty invaded the capital of Northern Song Dynasty and abducted the Emperor Jingkang and his abdicated father Emperor Xuanhe as well as other members of the imperial family and nobilities up to thousands in numbers. This incident marked the end of the Northern Song Dynasty.
6. Zong Ze (1060-1128 A.D.) was a famous general of Song Dynasty.
7. Yue Fei, also known as Yue Wu-mu, was a famous general in Southern Song Dynasty. See annotations no. 51 for Act One.
8. In ancient Chinese mythology, heaven is upheld by five gigantic pillars. This is often used as a metaphor for people who are talented and capable of achieving greatness.
9. "Victory in killing the enemies" (literally "killing the enemies and taking off their flag") is a metaphor used to describe someone who is fierce and victorious in a battle.
10. Lu You (1125-1210 A. D.), a famous patriotic poet from Southern Song Dynasty.

11. "Turn the table around" is the English equivalent of a Chinese idiom "Turning over the Qian and Kun." According to the I-ching, Qian symbolizes heaven and Kun symbolizes the earth, thus the phrase means to turn things upside down or yielding an opposite outcome.
12. "Our grand ambition shall be fed by the barbarian's flesh" is a famous line from a prose written by Song General Yue Fei. It is used to describe the determination to extinguish the enemies.
13. Binding hair is a Chinese metaphor for husband and wife.
14. Lu Fang-weng (1125-1210A.D.), also named Lu You, a famous patriotic poet from Song Dynasty.
15. "It is a warrior's duty to die in a battle, and is shameful to stick with his wife and children," is a line from the poem "Reading Books of War Tactics at Nighttime" by Lu You.
16. Loulan was the name of an ancient kingdom along the Silk Road. It was located in present day Xinjiang and had disappeared 1600 years ago. In the opera, it is generally used as a metaphor for enemies.
17. "Word of news" (literally "Wild goose and carp fish") is a Chinese metaphor for letters.
18. Yaxi refers to the west of Yamen.
19. Hong-yu refers to Liang Hong-yu. See annotations no. 24 of Act One.
20. Mu-lan is a legendary heroine whose story appeared in a poem called "Ballad of Mu-lan." Legend has it that she dressed as a man and joined the military in place of his old father.
21. "Letter" (literally "Piece of white silk") is a Chinese metaphor for letters. White silk was used to write letters in ancient China.
22. Hong-qiao refers to Yan Hong-qiao from Jin Dynasty. Story has it that, when he was sent to Yuzhang District for an official post, his friends asked him to deliver letters for them and he accepted the letters unwillingly. As he walked by a river, he threw all the letters into the water saying that, "This is none of my business and I am not a postman." His name is used as a metaphor for any lost mail.
23. ZHANG HONG-FAN (1238-1280 A. D.) was a Han Chinese general of the Yuan Dynasty. He was famous for winning the Battle of Yamen, thus ending the Southern Song Dynasty. In the opera he is referred to as a traitor because he helped barbarians against his own race.
24. General Fu Bo was a title given to generals with achievements and "Fu Bo" literally means "taming the waves." Numerous generals throughout Chinese history were given this title, among them Lu Bo-duo of Western Han and Ma Huan of Eastern Han were the more famous ones.
25. Jiaozhi was a district name used from Western Han to Tang Dynasty. It is present day Vietnam.

26. Huizhou (present day Huizhou City of Guangdong Province) was a district name from Song to Ming Dynasty.
27. Guangzhou (present day general area of Guangdong and Guangxi Province) was a district name used since the Three Kingdoms period.

ACT 3

(Scene setting: Ocean)

(Curtains open with a single line of "Paaiji" tune)

(Chorus sings off: "Phoenix eyes")

Extinguishing the barbarians and restoring Han.

ZHANG DA

[Enters on a boat with LEI JUN during interlude, directing the boat as the Song soldiers paddle and continues to sing]

In my dreams I worry for my country and family,

The blood in Central Plain has not dried.

Waves roaring in the ocean,

As the sun and moon change places,

With grudge I look up to heaven,

(Formulaic movements)

Trapped in the ocean,

With shortage of water and food,

Dreading that we are starved and there is no rain.

(Formulaic movements)

Wishing for BI-NIANG to come as soon as she receives the news,

(Singing to himself)

And rescue us from danger.

SCOUT

[Hastily enters with the "Chung Tau" percussion and speaks]

Reporting to the general, the Yuan soldiers launched a massive attack. We await your orders.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

SCOUT again.

(SCOUT accepts the order and exit)

ZHANG DA

[Sings: Faaidim lower line]

**Exterminating the tigers and killing the wolves now,
Saying has it that when soldiers attack,**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

The general will defend.

(With a single line of "Paaiji" tune, ZHANG DA leads all to walk the circle stage in rapid steps) (Concurrently during the "Paaiji" tune, ZHANG HONG-FAN on a boat enters from stage right and both boats reach a standoff across each other facing towards audience)

HONG-FAN

[Speaks: Haugu]

Familial brother ZHANG DA, I only try to persuade you, because we are distant relatives of the same ancestor. You are out of water and food and are only coming to an end. Why do you not surrender before it is too late, and you can enjoy glory again.

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Haugu]

Traitor, you have forgotten your ancestors and disgraced yourself by serving the enemies. I am ashamed to share an ancestor with you. My head may be chopped off but my mind will not surrender.

HONG-FAN

[Speaks: Haugu]

ZHANG DA, old saying has it: "If a king treats his official like animal, the official may treat the king as a commoner." The Song Emperor is fatuous, and you were banished numerous times. Why will you not take this opportunity to follow the bright side and abandon the dark? Why are you so stubborn?

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Haugu]

Nonsense. The Song Emperor was only deceived briefly, a righteous man serves his country till the end. You traitor are of Han descent, yet you serve as underlings for the barbarians. I swear that one of us must be destroyed, even if my life perishes with the enemies.

HONG-FAN

[Angered with the "Chung Yat Choi" percussion and speaks]

How dare you!

[Sings: Faaidim lower line]

Infuriated by your insults, I shall fight you without mercy.

[Speaks]

Attack!

(Battling at sea, ZHANG DA's vessel is defeated and exits)

(HONG-FAN is proud and chases off stage)

(Long percussion accompanies the "Water Waves" formulaic movements by ZHANG DA and LEI JUN as they both fall into the ocean and start to fight each other by mistake. Then they are washed apart with ZHANG DA exiting from stage left and LEI JUN exiting from stage right)

(Fast "Chat Choi" percussion)

MENG ZHONG

[Enters on a boat and sings: Chatjiching lower line]

**Through rivers and roaring waves I paddle,
A light breeze sends me towards Yaxi.
The night is dark and the path is misty,
Deeply concerned am I as I do not see any vessels.**

[During interlude, speaks]

Alas, arriving at Yamen, why do I not see the royal barge and our military vessels.

[Continues to sing]

**Fearing the worst, my heart is wrenching.
I am afraid the isolated vessel has sunk,
And the royal barge is under water.**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

Suddenly I see someone floating in the ocean.

[Speaks]

It is hard to tell just by looking if that is a friend or an enemy; I only hope he would survive to tell me what happened.

(LEI JUN floating in water and MENG ZHONG rescues him)

MENG ZHONG

[Recognizes LEI JUN and speaks]

It is brother LEI JUN. Brother, you must come to.

LEI JUN

[Weak but forces his eyes to open and speaks]

Old brother Meng.

(Closes his eyes again)

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks: Lawgubaak]

Alas, he is exhausted and I cannot ask him anything. Let me row the boat over and report to the lady.

Isn't this a good idea? It is indeed.

(Rows off)

(Fire effects off of the sky drop as sound effects of roaring wind and crushing waves begin)

(BI-NIANG, RUI-ZHU, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI, MENG ZHAO and FISHERWOMEN perform dance movements during the prelude)

(Chorus sings off: Faansin music after a single line of “Paaiji” tune)

Crushing waves and roaring ocean.

(Wind cymbal intercepts with percussion)

Seven hundred sails line up among the waves,

As the eastern wind sends us across the Lingding Ocean. (Percussion)

(Singing slowly at half the tempo)

BI-NIANG

[Continues to sing]

Moonlight is dim and the storm is encroaching.

It is a misty night among the mountains.

Day and night we kept travelling,

Rushing to Mount of Ya to the rescue.

[During interlude, speaks]

Travelling for days, why is the royal barge still not in sight?

[To MENG ZHAO, speaks]

Good old man, are we heading for the wrong direction?

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

My lady, my eyes are still good and hands are stable. My heart is as clear as the compass, our direction is correct.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

If there is no mistake, then we must speed up.

(Background music gradually changes to faster tempo)

RUI-ZHU

[Continues to sing]

Sailing far and wide amidst the crushing waves,

Fishing boats turned into naval vessels,

As the ocean is turned into a battlefield.

FISHERWOMEN

[Continues]

Do not say that women are feeble,

From now on women share the glory as well.

(Music interlude)

(Changes to faster tempo)

(Wind cymbal, slowly)

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

**As dangerous as the roaring waves,
Our loyalty and high spirits are not diminished.
Through hardships we reach the Mount of Ya,
My heart's ambition is as high as waves ten thousand feet high.**

(Music interlude) (Changes to faster tempo)

(Music changes to slower tempo)

EVERYONE

[Continues]

**Through hardships we reach the Mount of Ya,
Our heart's ambitions are as high as waves ten thousand feet high.**

BI-NIANG

[Gazes afar and continues] (Slightly slower)

I suddenly see a small boat paddling in the middle of the ocean.

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks]

My lady. That boat is paddling towards us, we must be cautious.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Halt the boat.

(Music accompanies the "Laak Laak Gu" percussion)

(LEI JUN and MENG ZHONG enter)

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks]

Hey, who is this?

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks]

Is Lady BI-NIANG on this big boat?

BI-NIANG

[Speaks] Yes,

I am.

(Looking carefully)

Is this good nephew Meng and Jun?

MENG ZHONG & LEI JUN

[Speak]

Yes we are.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Quick, get them on our boat.

(MENG ZHAO *helps the two onto the boat*)

MENG ZHONG & LEI JUN

[*Get on the boat and speak*]

We pay respect to you, my lady.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Jun, why are you all wet?

MENG ZHONG

[Abruptly speaks]

My lady, as you ordered I deliver your words to Yamen, yet when I arrived there was fire on the ocean.
I rescued brother LEI JUN from the ocean by accident, he was unconscious then, so I could not ask him.

Brother Lei, quickly report what happened to the lady.

LEI JUN

[*Unable to suppress his sorrow, speaks*]

Please listen, my lady.

[Sings: Yiifan Jungbaan]

**Eight thousand righteous warriors
Were trapped with no food and water.
Last night the royal barge ran aground at Yaxi's bank,
And the Yuan soldiers set a fire.
All troops were fighting at bay,
Yet we were seriously outnumbered and most have perished.
Among blazing fire and bloody waves,
The royal barge sank.**

[Sings: Gwanfa]

**If MENG ZHONG had not saved me,
I would have been buried by the waves.**

(*With "Dik Dik Chaang" percussion, everyone is stunned*)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Shocked upon hearing of the disaster,
I felt like my chest was stabbed.
Distraught that our country is at its demise,
Is the Song dynasty coming to an end?**

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks: Baaklaam]

Where is His Majesty now?

LEI JUN

[Continues]

Alive or dead, his whereabouts is unknown.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

Where has the general gone?

LEI JUN

[Continues]

He ran towards the northern shore up the mountains.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

What of the eight thousand strong?

LEI JUN

[Continues]

Half perished or heavily wounded in the fire.
Such agonizing pain to see our troops extinguished.
My lady, please come up with a plan to save the peril.

BI-NIANG

[*“Chung Yat Choi” percussion accompanies facial expressions and sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

**It is hard to fight the enemy since we are outnumbered,
Yet we must not give up despite the slim chance.
We shall fight with our wits without directly engaging them.
Conjuring up a plan in my mind.**

[Speaks]

All dear villagers, the Yuan soldiers have won today and there is bound to be a breach as they celebrate.
We shall attack at nighttime, and we might stand a chance to save the emperor, the general, as well as others.

(Everyone nods in agreement)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Jun, where are the Yuan military camps?

LEI JUN

[Speaks]

By the East and West shores of the Mount of Ya.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Set the boats with water and food to hoist sail, and abandon them. Since the Eastern wind is blowing, they will all sail towards the west of Mount of Ya. These will serve as a decoy to confuse the enemies.

(Everyone accepts the order)

BI-NIANG

[Continues to speak]

All other boats make a turn and dock at the Northeast shore. Then follow me directly to attack the Yuan camps.

(Everyone accepts the order)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

MENG ZHAO and the FISHERWOMEN will notify all the captains, to wait by their boats. Once they see fire within the Yuan camps, they must come to assistance immediately. This is an order.

(RUI-ZHU and FISHERWOMEN accept the order and exit)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

**Burning one's bridges for this battle,
We must collaborate in order to save the peril.**

CURTAIN

Annotations of ACT 3

1. "If a king treats his official like animal, the official may treat the king as a commoner." is a phrase derived from the Book of Mencius.
2. "Underlings" (literally "falcons and hounds") is a Chinese metaphor for someone who work as underlings at the bidding of their masters.
3. Lingding Ocean is located at the mouth of present day Pearl River of Guangdong. There is a poem named "Crossing the Lingding Ocean" composed by Wen Tian-xiang as he travelled through this ocean after he was captured by the Yuan soldiers.
4. "All troops were fighting at bay" (literally "taking advantage of the dangerous mountain pass to resist") is generally used to describe fighting a difficult battle.
5. "Burning one's bridges" (literally "Breaking the cooking pots and sinking the boats") is the English equivalent of a Chinese idiom describing the determination to fight on with no retreat.

ACT 4

(Scene setting: An ocean backdrop with a military camp setting on stage left)

(Curtains open with a single line of “Paaiji” tune)

(Sound effect of wind and waves and percussion signaling the third watch at night.

Upstage is dimmed with lighting focusing on downstage)

(Yuan soldiers A and B carrying lanterns enter with the “Wan Wan” percussion)

SOLDIER A

[Speaks: Baaklaam]

Tonight we celebrate our victory,
And all soldiers are completely drunk.
The general led the patrol to the West coast,
Leaving only one brigade to station at the camp.
Today the Song Emperor jumped into the ocean and died,
The fearsome enemies have all perished.
A rare night of rest,
Let us drink till dawn.

SOLDIER B

[Continues]

The general gave repeated instructions,
That we shall be alert and on guard.
Afraid that the remaining enemies might take advantage of this vulnerability,
And come to attack our camp in a dash.
We shall carefully patrol all surroundings,
And must not disobey the military orders. (Repeats the last line)

SOLDIER A

[Speaks]

Hey! The beaten soldiers are of no threat at all. Let us go have a drink first.

SOLDIER B

[Looks out to the ocean and speaks]

Hey! There are many ships on the ocean coming this way, could it be Zhang Shi-jie re-launching an attack?

SOLDIER A

[Unbelievably speaks]

No way, do not scare me.

[Looks towards the ocean]

Oh no, it is true. Let us quickly report this and prepare to fight the enemies.

(Music plays Jingsin "Entering the Chamber from the North Paaiji" first line)

(Music plays Jingsin "Palm Forest Moon" prelude; the ending of the prelude shall accommodate the actors' movements)

(BI-NIANG *equipped with sword*, LEI JUN, RUI-ZHU, MENG ZHONG, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI and FISHERWOMEN *equipped with knives on their back*, enter together during the prelude, and carefully observe the surrounding)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Jingsin "Palm Forest Moon"]

**Wind blowing violently, roaring through the middle of night,
Thousand layers of waves hitting the shore like thunder bolts,
Filled with fury we attack the camp.**

LEI JUN

[Looks around and speaks]

My lady, we are getting close to the Yuan camp.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Now that we are getting close, everyone must be on guard.

(Everyone nods in agreement)

MENG ZHONG

[Continues to sing]

Calmly I look around us, the night is completely silent.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

**I vow to trample over the enemy's camp,
To avenge for the loyal souls who died in the battle.**

BI-NIANG

[Quickly hushes him and speaks]

Jun, speak softer.

(Everyone looks around with percussion accompaniment)

RUI-ZHU

[In persuasion, speaks]

Jun.

[Continues to sing]

Attacking late night hoping for a slim chance of victory,

We must be careful not to alert the enemy.

(Music interlude)

(Everyone moves forward in the dark using mime movements during the interlude)

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

Behind the trees the enemy's camp is in sight,

Hold our breaths and take light steps.

To avenge our grief, waging all efforts, we attack the enemy's camp in the middle of the night.

(Everyone walks the circle stage in rapid steps in "Laak Laak Gu" percussion)

[Speaks off]

How dare you!

(YUAN GENERAL and four Yuan soldiers carrying lanterns enter)

(Lighting note: All lights brighten on stage, leaving only the sky drop dark)

YUAN GENERAL

[Speaks]

Who is this female intruder who dares to trespass our camp?

BI-NIANG

[Upon being discovered, forced to step out and speaks]

This is the volunteer army of Song, CHEN BI-NIANG from Chaozhou.

YUAN GENERAL

["Maan Dik Dik" percussion accompanies facial expression changing to a smile and speaks] I

wonder who it is, it is the lady. I have been waiting to welcome you for a long time.

BI-NIANG

[Angered and speaks]

How dare you mock me. Watch my sword.

(Swing out sword intending to fight)

(MENG ZHONG, LEI JUN, RUI-ZHU, JIN-XI and FISHERWOMEN all raise their knives)

YUAN GENERAL

[*Shouts out to halt them and speaks*]

Wait! My lady must not be angry. I have very important matters to tell you.

BI-NIANG

[*Speaks*]

You treacherous dog are about to die, what else do you have to say?

YUAN GENERAL

[*Speaks: Haugu*]

Right, but General ZHANG DA has already surrendered to us. I was ordered to wait here and welcome my lady to the camp. Together we shall discuss matters for the new dynasty.

BI-NIANG

[*Speaks: Haugu*]

Pi! The general is loyal to our country and there is no way he will surrender. Speak no more nonsense and stop smearing the general's reputation.

MENG ZHONG

[*Speaks: Haugu*]

We Han loyalists are not afraid of death. The general will never make deals with you treacherous dogs.

You are only deceiving yourself and trying to spread unwarranted rumors.

LEI JUN

[*Angered and Speaks: Haugu half line*]

There is no need to squabble with him.

RUI-ZHU

[*Angered and speaks: Haugu half line*]

Let us battle our ways into the enemy's camp. (*Intends to start fighting*)

YUAN GENERAL

[*Shouts out to halt them and speaks*]

Do not act recklessly, my lady. It is the indisputable truth that the general has surrendered to us. If you will not believe me, IMPERIAL ENVOY Wang is here, and can be witness. Please wait.

[*Turns around towards stage left and speaks*]

Summon IMPERIAL ENVOY Wang.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[*Enters and speaks: Nimbaak*]

Surrendering to the new emperor and abandoning the old court.

[*Steps forward to pay respect and speaks*]

I pay respect to you, my lady.

(*With the "Dik Dik Chaang" percussion, BI-NIANG and others show disbelieving expressions*)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Your Excellency, what are you here for?

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks]

I am here to welcome you, my lady.

BI-NIANG

[Too angered to speak and utters]

You, you...

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks] My

lady.

[Sings: Muk'yu]

The emperor and the prime minister are lost amidst the water.

The Song troops, over half of them dead in the netherworld.

Those who survived had surrendered in order to keep their lives.

The general is seriously injured, suffering immense pain.

If my lady will not come to our camp to care for him,

I am afraid his wound will burst open and his life will perish.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Nonsense! Even if the general is seriously injured, there is no way he would surrender. If you keep speaking such nonsense, do not blame my sword for being heartless.

(Holding out the sword to demonstrate aggression)

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Takes a step back, then steps forward again with a smile and speaks]

My lady, do not get angry. Please listen to me.

[Continues, slightly faster]

You and I wasted our efforts in being loyal to the Zhao family.

It is heaven's will to extinguish the Song and establish the Yuan.

The golden goblet cannot be repaired,

Let us surrender together and share prosperity.

BI-NIANG

[Unable to suppress anger, slaps the IMPERIAL ENVOY and sings: long Yiwong lower line]

**Back then you begged for reinforcements with the imperial order,
Bringing along the tunic to reward the general.
Today you change allegiance in time of danger,
And try to persuade me to surrender for riches.
Saying that the Song is doomed by heaven,
And that the general, seriously injured, has surrendered like Li Ling.
His principles are as righteous as Wen-shan,
And he is born to be a martyr.
Unlike the coward you are,
Who surrendered and tainted your reputation.
Do you not see all the heroes and heroines
Are ready to sacrifice their lives for the country and the people.**

[Continues with others joining in to sing]

**You are a heartless traitor,
And your name is tarnished for surrendering.
With fury we claim your perfidious life.**

(YUAN GENERAL and soldiers step forward to block her)

YUAN GENERAL

[Speaks]

My lady, our commander in chief regards you highly and that is why we attempt to persuade you to surrender. If you kill the IMPERIAL ENVOY, alas, I am afraid the general's life will hang in balance.

(Shocked, everyone on BI-NIANG's side retreats)

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Steps forward again and speaks]

My lady, I really came with the general's order. He was worried that you would not believe me, so he asked me to bring along this token as evidence. Guards, present the general's token and let the lady examine it.

(SOLDIER A ordered to present the strands of hair to BI-NIANG)

(Music plays in fast tempo)

BI-NIANG

[Picks up the strands of hair in shock as percussion begins and sings: Faansin Yilau]

Seeing the hair strands.

MENG ZHONG

[During music interlude, speaks]

My lady, why would this end up in the enemy's hands?

LEI JUN

[*During music interlude, speaks*]

Is it real or fake?

RUI-ZHU

[*During music interlude, speaks*]

Jun, won't the lady know herself?

BI-NIANG

[*Examines the strands of hair as music continues and sings*]

In shock and fear I am traumatized.

[*Changes to slower tempo and sings: Faansin Yiwong but using Jingsin singing style*]

Could it be that my husband could not withstand the torture,

And surrendered to save his own life?

But he is a man of righteousness and utmost loyalty.

Could this be a trap set out to trick us?

In agony I speculate, with warm tears filling my eyes.

Seeing the hair strands, my mind is strained.

(In distress)

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[*Laughs and speaks*]

My lady.

[*Speaks: Baaklaam*]

No need to hesitate further,

Pray, listen to my honest words.

The general sends me to bring his greetings,

And asks you to surrender and disarm.

If you disobey at this time,

The broken mirror and separated hairpin can never be repaired.

(“Chung Yat Choi” percussion as BI-NIANG and others react in shock)

BI-NIANG

[*Sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

Remembering the arrow shot out as a pledge,

How would the hair strands be returned in the enemy's camp.

I believe the general is dead.

Overcome by sorrow and tears my heart pains.

MENG ZHONG, LEI JUN, RUI-ZHU, JIN-XI and FISHERWOMEN

[*Speak*]

Take care, my lady.

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[With a comically cheerful face speaks]

My lady, the general is still alive. Why are you so miserable?

BI-NIANG

[With no way of expressing her anger, spits at the envoy and speaks]

Spit!

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Wipes off the spit as expression changes to anger and speaks]

Chen BI-NIANG, ZHANG DA's life is in my hands and you dare to treat me so offensively. Guards, bring

ZHANG DA.

(Soldiers A and B accept the order and exeunt)

(Music in Chewusin)

(Music plays "Falling of Snowgoose" as Soldiers A and B escort ZHANG DA in shackles, dressed in white robe with bloodstain and injured, with face covered with oil, enters)

BI-NIANG and others

[Rush forward with "Sin Fung" percussion shouting madly]

General!

(Yuan soldiers and General keep them apart with the "Three Arrows" percussion)

BI-NIANG and others

[Shout out in agony]

General!

ZHANG DA

[Seeing everyone, painfully speaks]

Good villagers, my wife!

(BI-NIANG pained)

("Chung Yat Choi" percussion accompanies music playing in Chewusin)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Middle section of "Autum River Farewell" in Chewusin without prelude]

For the country, you have spared no efforts,

By staying loyal and preserving your good name.

Under roaring wind, one can see how strong grass can be,

And your unwavering loyalty shines through history.

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

**Ashamed to face all the righteous heroes,
I have failed my mission crossing the river and they all perished.**

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

**Pity that the fierce general is outnumbered and lost in fighting the enemy.
With heavy grudge, I cry out to him as we both are consumed by great enmity.**

ZHANG DA

[*During interlude* speaks]

My wife, all of you must abandon me. Just remember my pledge and further my ambition. Kill the enemies and save the country.

[Continues to sing, changing to a faster tempo]

A man shall live as a person of extraordinary talent and die an honorable spirit.

MENG ZHONG

[Continues]

**Touched by the general's encouraging words,
I vow to fight the enemies alive or dead.**

LEI JUN

[Continues]

**Unbearable to see the general captured, With
immense regret we failed to rescue him.**

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

**My tears running down in silence,
Horrendous to see him drenched in blood, how excruciating.**

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

**Wishing that all of you united, can rebuild the country.
Listen to me, good villagers and my dear wife,
Do not surrender and stain your reputation for my sake.**

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

**Wishing that our wedlock last for three lifetimes,
And we shall reunite in our next lives.**

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

Think not of the suffering of the mandarin ducks.

You should know that the country is of higher priority.

I only hope to see you crush the enemy.

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

Touched by your loyalty and righteousness,

You deserve my utmost respect.

(Music plays Jingsin notations)

(Accompanies by "Maan Dik Dik" percussion)

IMPERIAL ENVOY

[Speaks]

My lady, the world belongs to the people, but your husband belongs to you. How could you bear to see
the general's head chopped off?

(BI-NIANG *cries unbearably*)

ZHANG DA

[Speaks: Haugu]

My wife, do not grieve for me. You must know that this is the time to shed blood. ("Yat Choi"
percussion) Not the time to shed tears, my good wife!

[Sings: Yifaan Jongbaan lower line]

With the nest toppled, the eggs will crack.

There is no home if the country is ruined.

Encouraging my wife, offering my advice repeatedly.

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

The general's courage shocks heaven and earth.

This woman is responsible for the country's rise and fall.

I shall always remember your words of gold and jade,

And shall see it through alive or dead.

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

Enduring pain, I encourage MENG ZHONG,

At calamitous times, integrity emerges.

MENG ZHONG

[Continues]

I humbly accept your teaching,

And shall keep my integrity intact.

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

Calling upon little Jun,

You must work hard to restore the lost country.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

Even with my last breath,

I vow to extinguish the beacon fire.

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

Do not grieve, RUI-ZHU.

Women are no longer viewed as weaklings.

RUI-ZHU

[*Swallowing tears* and continues]

Children of the Han family feel glorious serving the country.

ZHANG DA

[Continues singing through the music interlude]

I pray in anticipation of extinguishing the barbarians.

(Music plays)

BI-NIANG

[*In extreme sorrow* speaks]

General!

[Sings: Yifaan Muk'yu]

You write history with your blood,

Pity my hair strands are unable to hold on to our love.

ZHANG DA

[Continues]

Who caused our separation?

Who caused our country to perish, our family to fall apart and toppled the nest?

[In hatred]

All because the barbarians invaded,

Encroaching our land and harm our people.

[Sings: Naam yam without music]

Saving the country and the people (brisk tempo) is my responsibility.

(Brisker tempo)

We shall never quit until we kill the barbarians.

At this time, I sacrifice my life for the greater cause.

(Music accompaniment slowing a bit)

Sacrificing my life.

[Sings: Gwanfa]

I hope that you will all succeed my ambition in unity.

(Music plays)

BI-NIANG

[Sings: Yifaan Gwanfa lower line]

From now on, the rescue mission and attacks will fall on my shoulder.

ZHANG DA

[Sings: fast Gwanfa]

When you fight north to reclaim the Central Plain,

Do not forget to offer familial prayers to my spirit.

YUAN GENERAL

[Shouting]

How dare you! You are about to die and you still dare to be so defiant. Kill him!

(Fighting begins)

(Soldiers A and B are about to kill ZHANG DA, as BI-NIANG and others rushed up to defend him, but were fought off by the YUAN GENERAL)

ZHANG DA

[Sacrificing himself to block off the Yuan soldiers and General, and hastily speaks: Haugu]

All of you must remain alive for the greater cause. Run for your lives!

EVERYONE ON BI-NIANG'S SIDE

[Speaks]

General!

ZHANG DA

[Speaks]

All of you must follow my aspiration and plan for an uprising. Run! Run!

(BI-NIANG and all clench their teeth, stomp their feet and exeunt)

(ZHANG DA fights the Yuan soldiers and strangles the IMPERIAL ENVOY with his shackles)

(HONG-FAN enters in a rush at this moment and kills ZHANG DA with a sword)

(ZHANG DA wounded by the sword fall down and die with the IMPERIAL ENVOY together)

HONG-FAN

[Infuriated and speaks]

Hey! I was fooled by that bitch and fell into her luring scheme. Today we let the tiger return to the mountain, I am afraid there will be consequences. Let this general in chief lead the army straight to Haizhou and extinguish them, to avenge my rage.

[Sings: Gwanfa lowercase]

Ordering the troops to chase after them by land and sea,

We shall sweep out all caves and plough through all lands.

CURTAIN

Annotations of ACT 4

1. In ancient China, there were night watchmen who patrolled the streets to announce the time and there were five night watches throughout the night.
2. Zhang Shi-jie (?-1279 A. D.) was a general known for resisting the Yuan during the Song Dynasty. He was the last general commander of the Song fleet and was defeated at the Naval Battle of Mount Ya as he was escorting the Song Emperor to flee.
3. "Pi" is an onomatopoeia expression of reprimand. (Equivalent to "Bah".)
4. "Netherworld" (literally "the city of death by injustice") is a place where spirits of people who died of unnatural cause are imprisoned. According to Chinese folktales, everyone has a predetermined age, and if one died of accident before one's age is up, one's spirit will be imprisoned in this place until one's designated age. Then the spirit will be released to be sent to hell or be reincarnated.
5. Li Ling (? - 74 B. C.) was the grandson of famous Western Han General Li Guang. He himself was also a general who served under Emperor Wu of Han Dynasty. He defected to the northern barbarians of his time after being defeated.
6. Wen-shan refers to Wen Tian-xiang, see annotations no. 55 for Act One.
7. "Broken mirror and separated hairpin" is a Chinese metaphor for separated lovers/couples.
8. "All of you united" (literally "Unified aspirations as strong as a fort") is a Chinese idiom describing how great power can be created by unifying everyone's goals.
9. "Words of golden and jade" is a Chinese metaphor for teachings or advice that is as valuable as gold and jade.
10. "Let the tiger return to the mountain" is a Chinese idiom meaning there will be consequences if you let your enemies escape, using tiger as a metaphor for enemies.

ACT 5

(Scene setting: Same as act two. “Note that the arrow on the tree can be taken out”)

(BI-NIANG, WIFE OF MENG, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI, FISHERWOMEN “all dressed in white” and kneel by the shore making funeral offerings)

(Curtains open with a single line of “Paaiji” tune)

(Music commences with “Giu Tau” percussion)

(Music accompanies dialogue)

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

General! Where is your loyal soul?

BI-NIANG

[*After making offerings, speaks: Sibaak*]

The loyal spirit will revolve around the Han land,

Even the trees and grasses are saddened.

We shall wash out the barbarians with jade blood,

And never forget this unmatched grudge.

(*Immense sorrow and anger*)

JIN-XI

[*Steps forward to offer comfort and speaks*]

My lady, the general had gloriously sacrificed himself for the country and his fame will go down to posterity. Please restrain your grief and move on. Take care of yourself first.

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

My lady, please take care.

(Music plays “Ambush on All Sides” to accompany the dialogues below)

BI-NIANG

[*Restraining her grief and speaks*]

The general sacrificed himself for the country, and I, BI-NIANG, must continue his aspirations and complete the unfinished work. All I am worried about now, on this brink of a storm, is that our reinforcements have not yet arrived. I am afraid... Ai!

(*Unable to continue*)

YIN-JIAO

[*Offering comfort and speaks*]

My lady, I believe XU DA-NIANG is leading the volunteer army. They are on their way and will arrive soon. Do not fear the large troops of the barbarians.

WIFE OF MENG

[*Speaks*]

My lady. My husband and son are patrolling the north and west forts and the volunteers are watching out on sea and land. If the enemies attack, we shall crush them.

(No percussion accompaniment for the above dialogue, only the pipa plays "Ambush on All Sides" in the background)

BI-NIANG

[*Still looking worried, speaks*]

Let us hope so.

(*Fire lighting effect on the sky drop, sounds of shouting and killings from far to near*)

(*Everyone is shocked*)

(MENG ZHAO, wounded by an arrow, stumbled out with the "Chung Tau" percussion)

(MENG ZHONG follows MENG ZHAO helping him get up)

BI-NIANG, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI

[*Step forward and speak*]

Uncle Meng!

WIFE OF MENG

[*Heartbroken and speaks*]

My husband, you...

MENG ZHAO

[*Trying hard to stay conscious and speaks: Haugu*]

Old partner, do not ask anymore. My lady, pity that I am old and weak, and am not able to fight the enemy. The enemies have broken through the north and west forts ("Yat Choi" percussion) and their ships are docking soon. Please send reinforcements to defend the beachhead.

MENG ZHONG

[*Speaks: Haugu*]

My lady, the Yuan soldiers come in masses by land and sea. Father fought courageously and was wounded. Our army and the people are all swamped. Please come up with a plan soon to protect Haizhou.

BI-NIANG

[With "Chung Yat Choi" percussion, shocked and speaks: Haugu]

The situation has come to this point and we can only die. Good nephew, care for his wound with your mother. I shall lead the troops myself and fight the final battle.

JIN-XI

[Speaks: Haugu]

Brother MENG ZHONG, Let me and aunty take care of him. You go with the lady to kill the enemies.

MENG ZHAO

[Speaks]

My lady, I am heavily wounded and will not survive. It has been my wish to sacrifice for the country. All of you go kill the enemies, do not worry about this old man.

BI-NIANG & FISHERWOMEN

[In greif and speak]

Uncle Meng.

MENG ZHONG & WIFE OF MENG

[Together speak]

Husband! Father!

MENG ZHAO

[Sighs with "Maan Dik Dik" percussion and speaks]

My son Zhong, my old partner, my lady!

[Sings: traditional Yiwong lower line]

**Sadly I cannot kill the enemies alive,
And I die without achieving my aspirations.**

[Speeding up tempo]

**Covering my wound, I encourage my wife to recover the Han lands.
My corpse wrapped in horses' hides,
I die a glorious death that will be remembered.**

(Pulls out the arrow and dies with "Yum Law" percussion)

(Everyone cries with "Huk Seung Si" music and percussion)

RUI-ZHU

[With "Chung Tau" percussion, enters and speaks]

My lady, Haizhou is being surrounded. My mother XU DA-NIANG leads the volunteer troops fighting fiercely but cannot get through to us. Please make a decision.

BI-NIANG

[With "Chung Yat Choi" percussion and speaks]

The reinforcements are being fought off and cannot reach us?

(Being hesitant)

LEI JUN

[With "Chung Tau" percussion, enters holding a letter and speaks]

My lady. The enemies shot over an arrow with a letter, please have a look.

(Handing over the letter)

BI-NIANG

[Receives the letter and reads]

Urgent order from the General-in-chief, ZHANG HONG-FAN . To all the people at Haizhou: Tie up CHEN BI-NIANG in the morning and hand her over. If there are any delays, none will be spared once the army arrives. None will be spared once the army arrives.

(Everyone is shocked)

LEI JUN

[Speaks: Haugu]

My lady, we shall follow you alive or dead and fight one final battle with them.

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks: Haugu]

Together we fight the invaders, and vow not to hand over our lady to the enemy.

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

Yes! We vow not to hand over our lady to the enemy.

BI-NIANG

[Touched, at down stage sings: long Gwanfa lower line]

Their courage can make the gods and demons weep,

Their pure loyalty will go down in posterity.

It is rare to see so many heroes and heroines,

Unfortunately the enemy is strong and we are weak and stranded.

If I lead the crowd to fight our way out of the tiger's den,

It is like bringing wood to save a fire,

There will be heaps of loyal skeletons piled up on the mountain.

I shall take on the thousand catty burden,

And have a plan to save the situation.

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks]

My lady, at this point, let us quickly fight our final battle with the enemy. If we win, then we can breakthrough and escape. If we lose, we are willing to sacrifice for the country together.

BI-NIANG

[*Showing immense confidence and speaks*]

Hush, RUI-ZHU. I have my own plan. Quickly write a letter for me and shoot it over to the Yuan camp. Invite ZHANG HONG-FAN to come in the morning at the hour of Chen, to have a duel with me.

(RUI-ZHU accepts the order and exits)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Jun and good nephew Meng, the two of you will deliver an order. Ask the villagers and volunteers of all camps to come here and await further instructions.

(LEI JUN and MENG ZHONG accept the order and exeunt)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Aunty Meng.

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

My lady, what is your order?

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Aunty, would you complain if you were to sacrifice your life for the country?

WIFE OF MENG

[Speaks]

My lady, I would feel glorious to have the opportunity to sacrifice my life for the country.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

In that case, you, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI and others, prepare the gong and drum then await my orders here.

(WIFE OF MENG, YIN-JIAO, JIN-XI and FISHERWOMEN accept the order and exeunt)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

General, please forgive BI-NIANG for not being able to fulfill the final orders you gave me.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

BI-NIANG is not able to fight heaven's plan.

May the rest of them be able to continue the cause and recover Shenzhou.

At this time, I shall sacrifice for my love and my country.

May your loyal spirit wait for mine.

(With "Chung Tau" percussion, RUI-ZHU, LEI JUN, MENG ZHONG, four Volunteers, WIFE OF MENG, YIN-JIAO and FISHERWOMEN bring the drum and enter)

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

Reporting to my lady, everything is done.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

All good villagers, this is the final critical moment and I must ensure that all of you can escape. If I give out any orders, are you all willing to obey?

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

We all vow to obey our lady's orders.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

In this case, listen to my orders.

[Sings: Chatjiching lower line]

By my strategy to stall off immediate attack from the enemy,

We are unable to defend our home at this time.

To preserve our military might, I have made a plan.

(Faster tempo)

To cover all of you to escape from the tiger's den,

And seek shelter on the Phoenix Mountain.

[Sings: Gwanfa]

Raise the flag of rebellion and extinguish the bandits.

[Ending with "Saam Choi" percussion and speaks]

All good villagers, once you hear the drumming, quickly rush through the Yuan camps and head straight to Phoenix Mountain. Reunite with XU DA-NIANG's volunteer army and plan for the rebellion.

RUI-ZHU, once you see your mother, send her my regards. It is now at Da-niang's discretion to fight the

Yuan and recover the country.

RUI-ZHU

[Speaks]

I shall remember my lady's instructions. But what plans do you have for yourself?

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

Yes, what plans do you have for yourself, my lady?

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

Good villagers. The traitor ZHANG HONG-FAN, has publicly declared his wish to capture me. If I go along with you, they will keep chasing after us. In that case, not only will I be killed, I will cause many deaths among you. I have decided to stay behind to deter them with Auntie Meng. We shall do the drumming to provide cover for all of you to escape. You may all go with nothing to worry.

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

My lady, the enemies are massive and we have no reinforcements, how can you take such a big risk.

BI-NIANG

[*Determined* and speaks]

I have made up my mind and there is nothing more to say. Just go quickly!

EVERYONE

[*With "Chung Yat Choi" percussion, sings: deep Gwanfa lower line*]

Aiyaya, we vow to be together alive or dead. We cannot leave her ladyship behind.

[Speaks] My lady.

(Everyone kneels down)

(Music begins)

(Music plays prelude of "Threefold Sorrow")

BI-NIANG

[*Restraining heartbreak, during prelude* speaks]

Ai! The situation is of utmost urgency and we have no choice. Run for your life and do not worry about me.

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks] My

lady.

[Sings: "Threefold Sorrow"]

**Enduring the good times and sufferings,
Sharing hatred of the same enemy.
We shall stay and leave altogether,
Sailing on the same boat amidst any storm.**

YIN-JIAO

[Continues]

**We cannot allow her ladyship to die in the enemies hands.
To sacrifice herself in deterring the enemies.
We vow to fight a decisive final battle,
Our names will be known to posterity as we fight to death.**

EVERYONE

[Speaks]

We would rather die serving the country, than let the barbaric Hu horses trample over Haizhou.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

All good villagers.

[Continues]

**With my wish unfulfilled,
I look up to heaven with my tears running down my cheeks.
The villain wishes to force my surrender and won't give up.
We are heavily outnumbered and cannot defend Haizhou.
But if all of you can fight out of this bloody path,
And recover our country, I shall gladly meet my death.**

[Speaks]

I pray that all of you will carry on my ambition and repair the broken golden goblet.

LEI JUN

[Mournfully speaks]

My lady

[Continues]

**Heart wrenchingly my eyes are filled with tears.
How can we seek shelter as you die in the hands of the enemies?**

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

**With no regrets we shall be martyrs if necessary.
Our high spirits strengthen Han lands.
We would rather die with the enemies in serving the country,
There is no need for you to be buried alone in Haizhou.**

EVERYONE

[Speaks] My lady.

BI-NIANG

[*Helping everyone get up and painfully speaks*]

All good villagers.

[Sings: Yifaan Zhongbaan lower line]

Shedding my tears I gaze out to our country,

Saddened that it is covered with barbarians,

Alas! Our people,

Where is home when the country is destroyed?

The storm is toppling our nest,

And one death may not recover the Han land,

One must preserve oneself and wait,

To recover the country and extinguish the enemies.

The barbarians are on the rampage,

May all of you seek to live despite this humiliation.

With the sacrifice of just one body,

I can save hundreds and thousands.

Sincerely I persuade you all.

Do not give up the greater cause for personal relations.

Get out of this barrage

And do not run into the tiger's den.

[Sings: Jingsin Gwanfa upper line]

If all of you courageously sacrifice yourselves,

Who is going to continue with the rebellion against the Yuan and recover our country?

MENG ZHONG

[Speaks: Guk Bat Baaklaam]

We vow not to leave, vow not to leave.

We would rather feed the tiger's mouth, feed the tiger's mouth.

LEI JUN

[Continues]

Together we shall hold securely,

As our great moral force surpasses heaven, surpasses heaven.

RUI-ZHU

[Continues]

We and our lady cannot be separated.

Together we stay or together we run, together we run.

BI-NIANG

[Continues]

Don't be heartbroken and don't feel detest.

This is a military order and you must obey, must obey.

EVERYONE

[Together speaks]

We would rather disobey the military order, and swear upon our grave we shall not leave.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks: Haugu]

Good villagers, with one life I can save thousands, please do not delay any more, I hope to break off one twig and spread millions of seeds. So that the fire of the rebellion against the Yuan will not extinguish. Do you remember when the general sacrificed for the country, restraining my pain I was able to follow his last orders. Today, this is my order at this dangerous time, how could you all forget the greater cause for private feelings. (Faster tempo) My aspirations are not achieved, and all of you must continue and recover the Han lands one day. If the people and army disobey orders, (Slower tempo) then I shall cut my throat to remonstrate you with my dead body, (*Percussion*) and give up my head.

(Draws out the sword about to commit suicide)

EVERYONE

[*Intercepting BI-NIANG and speaks*]

Please do not do this my lady. We will listen to your orders.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

That is the right thing to do.

[Sings: Gwanfa lower line]

Turning around I pull out my husband's arrow,

(Music plays from slow to fast)

[*Pulls out the arrow from the tree and continues to sing*]

And give this to Jun and his wife to commemorate our country's enmity.

Do not allow the barbarians to pass down their ancestral line,

We shall fight to save the country and the people.

(Handing the arrow to LEI JUN)

LEI JUN & RUI-ZHU

[*LEI JUN receives the arrow and together with RUI-ZHU speak*]

We shall remember our lady's teachings.

(Percussion plays the last watch of the night. Lighting fades away the moon and stars on the sky drop and turn on lighting for dawn)

BI-NIANG

[Speaks]

It is the crack of dawn, good villagers, stay no longer and leave quickly.

EVERYONE

[*Unwilling to leave and speaks*]

My lady!

BI-NIANG

[*Getting anxious and speaks*]

All of you, don't be loath to leave, just take off quickly!

EVERYONE

[*Together speaks*]

My lady, together we bow and bid you farewell. One day we shall kill the enemies and avenge your death.

BI-NIANG

[*Restraining pain and speaks*]

Speak no more. Beat the drums and sound the gong as signal for retreat. All of you take off now.

(WIFE OF MENG beats the drums)

EVERYONE

[*Get up unwillingly and speaks*]

My lady, please take care!

BI-NIANG

[*Restraining tears, waves one hand, covers the face with another and speaks*]

Go now!

MENG ZHONG

[*Turns back to WIFE OF MENG and speaks*]

Mother! Take care!

(WIFE OF MENG waves in tears)

(LEI JUN, RUI-ZHU, MENG ZHONG, YIN-JIAO, four Volunteers, FISHERWOMEN, all exeunt)

BI-NIANG

[*After the "Watersplash" formulaic movements, sings: Gwanfa lower line*]

**Rapid Han river flows into the ocean,
The heroes' tragedy cannot be washed off.
May the mountains and rivers give me strength,
To kill the bandits with my sword.**

HONG-FAN

[*Speaks off*]

Where are you going?

(With "Laak laak Gu" percussion enters with four Archers)

BI-NIANG

[*Speaks*]

You traitor are right on time.

HONG-FAN

[Speaks: Haugu]

Insolent rebel, today you are meeting your end. If you are wise you should surrender, or else, your crime will not be pardoned.

BI-NIANG

[Speaks: Haugu]

Pi! The first slash is to avenge my country's demise. The second slash is to avenge my husband's death. The third slash is to chop off your head for all the sacrificed loyal heroes.

(Killing begins)

HONG-FAN

[Fought off to stage left and speaks]

Archers, shoot!

(Four Archers shoot arrows)

(BI-NIANG, WIFE OF MENG both were shot)

(BI-NIANG, wounded, runs towards the pine tree where ZHANG DA's arrow was, struggles to hold her sword while standing straight)

(HONG-FAN leads four Archers rushing over, fire lighting shoots out from all over, BI-NIANG with sword still in hand in the same pose, standing as if she is still alive)

(HONG-FAN, horrified, hops off the horse, and crawls off stage with four Archers)

(Chorus sings off)

**The heart of pure loyalty is remembered in writings,
With blood the Spring and Autumn Annals were written.
Even the mountains and rivers lament bitterly for their sacrifices,
Heaven and earth grieve for the courageous martyrs.
The loyal heroine's name will go down in posterity and
Her loyal spirit will forever live around,**

(Slower tempo)

The Island of Farewell.

FINAL CURTAIN

Annotations of ACT 5

1. "Unmatched grudge" (literally "A grudge so great that one swears not to live under the same sky as the enemy") is a Chinese saying to describe the seriousness of the grudge held against one's enemy.
2. "We shall crush them" (literally "killing them to a point where not a single piece of armor will be intact") is a Chinese idiom describing the extent one will go in destroying enemies.
3. "Being surrounded" (literally "not even water can seep through") is a Chinese idiom used to describe how something is carefully guarded.
4. "None will be spared" (literally "Not even the chickens and dogs will be left") is a Chinese idiom describing the extent of the killings.
5. "Bringing wood to save a fire" is a Chinese idiom used as a metaphor for a wrong solution.
6. "The hour of Chen" is equivalent to modern time 7-9am in the morning.
7. "Shenzhou" (literally "god's continent") is another term reference to China, like Central Plain.
8. During a battle in ancient China, the troops used the drum and gong to signal advancement or retreat. The sound of drumming signified advancement and the sound of the gong signified retreat.
9. "Writings" (literally "bamboo and silk") is a term using the writing materials, which were bamboo and silk in ancient China, to serve as a metaphor for written history.
10. "Spring and Autumn Annals" is the official chronicle of the State of Lu covering the period from 722 B. C. to 481 B. C. and the earliest surviving Chinese historical text.