

Classic Poetry Series

Wang Changling
- poems -

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Wang Changling()

At Hibiscus Inn

Too young to have learned what sorrow means,
Attired for spring, she climbs to her high chamber. . . .
The new green of the street-willows is wounding her heart -
Just for a title she sent him to war.

Wang Changling

At The Border Fortress

Drink, my horse, while we cross the autumn water! -
The stream is cold and the wind like a sword,
As we watch against the sunset on the sandy plain,
Far, far away, shadowy Ling-t'ao.
Old battles, waged by those long walls,
Once were proud on all men's tongues.
But antiquity now is a yellow dust,
Confusing in the grasses its ruins and white bones.

Wang Changling

By Her Quiet Window

Last night, while a gust blew peach-petals open
And the moon shone high on the Palace Beyond Time,
The Emperor gave P'ing-yang, for her dancing,
Brocades against the cold spring-wind.

Wang Changling

Sigh In The Court Of Perpetual Faith

The moon goes back to the time of Ch'in, the wall to the time of Han,
And the road our troops are travelling goes back three hundred miles. . . .
Oh, for the Winged General at the Dragon City -
That never a Tartar horseman might cross the Yin Mountains!

Wang Changling

Song Of Spring Palace

She brings a broom at dawn to the Golden Palace doorway
And dusts the hall from end to end with her round fan,
And, for all her jade-whiteness, she envies a crow
Whose cold wings are kindled in the Court of the Bright Sun.

Wang Changling

Under The Border Fortress

With this cold night-rain hiding the river, you have come into Wu.
In the level dawn, all alone, you will be starting for the mountains of Ch'u.
Answer, if they ask of me at Lo-yang:
'One-hearted as ice in a crystal vase.'
It's night, icy rain falling as we follow the River into Wu,
on a still dawn I'll see you off, how lonely Chu's mountains will be.
If my kith and kin at Luoyang ask of me, do you answer,
'My heart's a sheet of ice in a jade vase.'

Wang Changling

With My Brother At The South Study

Cicadas complain of thin mulberry-trees
In the Eighth-month chill at the frontier pass.
Through the gate and back again, all along the road,
There is nothing anywhere but yellow reeds and grasses
And the bones of soldiers from Yu and from Ping
Who have buried their lives in the dusty sand.
. . . Let never a cavalier stir you to envy
With boasts of his horse and his horsemanship.

Wang Changling