

LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE STORY OF CHANGHWA AND HONGNYŎN

Changhwa Hongnyŏn chŏn (The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyŏn)¹ has been popular for several centuries, spawning numerous written versions (both hand copied and printed) in Korean, Classical Chinese, and mixed script, for children and for adults, as well as multiple animated versions and movies.² For instance, this story inspired the critically acclaimed *Tale of Two Sisters* (2003), which was remade into an English version entitled *The Uninvited* (2009). No doubt its popularity has to do with its subject matter, as it is a sort of “Cinderella Story” in which two virtuous sisters meet their deaths through the machinations of a cruel step-mother, and thus touches on the age-old theme of blended families and the tensions inherent within them.³ The story is in fact based on a real event, and was first written down by Chŏn Tonghŭl (1610–1705). Over time, the story was embellished to include didactic and supernatural elements, including the reincarnation of the two sisters through their father’s remarriage to a model step-mother so that they can marry well, have children, and live to ripe old ages.⁴

¹ A good general introduction to this work can be found on the Academy of Korean Studies’ online *Encyclopedia of Korean Culture* at http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Index?contents_id=E0048918. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether the story was first written in classical Chinese or Korean. See Yun Chŏng’an, “*Changhwa Hongnyŏn chŏn yŏn’gu*” [A study of *The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyŏn*] (Master’s Thesis, Seoul sirip taehakkyo, 2009), 11–12.

² We would like to express our thanks to our anonymous reviewer who provided a good deal of advice helpful to revising our translation.

³ An analysis of the movie and its relationship with the story, as well as an overview of relevant Korean scholarship, can be found in Seo Jeongnam, “Analysis of *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* (A Tale of Two Sisters): With a Special Focus on the Narrative and Characters,” *Acta Koreana* 14, no. 1 (June 2011): 73–116.

⁴ A good introduction to the various versions of this work of literature can be found in Sŏ Hyeŭn “*Changhwa Hongnyŏn chŏn ibon kyeyŏl ŭi sŏnggyŏk kwa tokcha ŭisik*” [A study of the characteristics and readers’ consciousness of the different versions of *The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyŏn*],

The version translated here was published by Tökhong sörim first in 1925, with the 1930 edition serving as the basis of this translation, a time that saw a boom in such traditional novels, as new printing technology made possible the production of attractive editions at a reasonable price that even farmers and laborers could afford.⁵ Moreover, such classic texts, far removed from the politics of the day, were reasonably safe from colonial censorship.⁶ Perhaps stories with such romantic and supernatural elements set in a past when Korea was independent provided an opportunity for escape into a fantasy world in which, despite the difficulties people faced, the universe was a fundamentally moral one in which evil would be punished and good rewarded.

There are various ways of interpreting the differing versions of *The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyön*. That said, one common element in the various written versions, including the one translated here, is the fear of a mother and her children, felt particularly strongly in a patriarchal society, that should the mother die while the children are still unwed, they will find themselves displaced (both in terms of their father's love and property) by a new mother and her children. In this particular version, the wicked stepmother successfully (in a manner) causes the death of both of the sisters by tricking their father, who though kind and loving, is rather weak and foolish, failing not only to defend his daughters, but cooperating in their deaths and in the resulting cover up. Though the stepmother could easily be a sympathetic character—after all, it is not easy to be the second wife and to mother children that are not one's own, in this version, the stepmother's wickedness is not only made known through her terribly ugly appearance, but is somehow intrinsic to her character—she is beyond redemption or sympathy.⁷

Despite the wicked step-mother's machinations, the forces of a benevolent universe, including a tiger with a human voice, work together so that the ghosts of the two sisters are able, through a heroic magistrate, to prove their innocence and the guilt of their stepmother and her eldest son, leading to their executions (The older sister's filial plea for their father is heeded by the state and he is spared). Their father then marries a good woman. She gives birth to the reincarnated girls, who, being inherently virtuous (and therefore beautiful), live long and full lives with their handsome and talented husbands and are blessed with many descendants. Rather than critiquing the family system that created such tensions and conflicts, the story affirms the existing order by placing the blame squarely on the moral quality of the people involved. Wicked step-mother versus good step-mother, with the weak father of the two sisters seemingly experiencing moral reform through the virtuous actions of the magistrate—patriarchy thereby redeemed in

Ömunhak 97 (August 2007): 387–418.

⁵ This version was reprinted as volume six of the Adan mun'go kojön ch'ongsö series, Yi Chuyöng, ed., *Changhwa Hongnyön chön* [*The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyön*] (Seoul: Hyönsil munhwa, 2007).

⁶ See Yi Chuyöng, 33–37.

⁷ Yi Chöngwön, *Chön ül pöm bada* [Violating traditional fiction] (Seoul: Ungjin chisik hausü, 2010), 14–33.

the father-state and its servant. That being said, *The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyŏn* is both entertaining and fascinating, and one that invites further discussion and analysis.⁸

THE STORY OF CHANGHWA AND HONGNYŎN

Translated by FRANKLIN RAUSCH, with GILLIEAN LEE and SUJIN LEE

In the kingdom of Chosŏn during the reign of King Sejong in Ch'ŏlsan County in Pyŏngan Province lived a man whose family name was Pae and whose personal name was Muryong. As a member of the local gentry he had risen to become an Overseer.⁹ He was warmhearted and as there was nothing more for him to desire; he had nothing to envy, save for one thing, he had no children, which was a constant source of sadness for him and his wife.

But one day Muryong's wife Mrs. Chang felt weary and took to her bed.¹⁰ As she was dozing, a heavenly messenger suddenly descended from the sky and gave her a single flower. As soon as she took it a whirlwind kicked up, and the flower changed into a fairy and entered her bosom. Mrs. Chang woke up with a start. She thought her dream to be an auspicious omen and told the Overseer "Heaven has looked with pity on our family's lack of offspring and will now bless us with a precious child." They were very happy and indeed, from that day Mrs. Chang showed signs of pregnancy. One evening after ten months, as a beautiful

⁸ I first learned about the story after watching *The Two Sisters*, which I wanted to incorporate into a course on popular culture in East Asia I teach at Lander University as part of the Honors College. Thinking that the students would enjoy reading an older written version and that a comparison with the movie would make for a good assignment, on a whim I did an internet search for the story and, finding a version (www.seelotus.com/gojeon/gojeon/so-seol/jang-hwa-hong-lyeon-jeon.htm), worked with a former student of mine, Sujin Lee, to translate it into English. I thoroughly enjoyed translating that work, and regretting the lack of an English version of this story, I contacted *Acta Koreana* to see if there might be an interest in publishing a translation of *The Story of Changhwa and Hongnyŏn*. I was told there was, but that an older, authenticated version should be used. I therefore searched and found the version translated herein that was published in 1930. With the help of Gilliean Lee, who is also a professor at Lander, and using the earlier contemporary translation as a base, I rendered this version into English. I need also to recognize the hard work of Dr. Haeseong Park of Charleston Southern University who assisted me with some particularly difficult parts of the 1930 text. I appreciate the help of my collaborators, but in the end, any mistakes are ultimately my responsibility.

⁹ The term for "overseer" here, *chmasu* 座首, can also be translated as "head of the local gentry," "chief of the local *yangban*," or "magistrate's deputy." However, we have chosen to go with "the Overseer's" because it is a less wordy title and because it emphasizes the irony that the Overseer fails to properly oversee his own family.

¹⁰ We have rendered the Korean "ssŏ" as "Mrs." here and elsewhere.

fragrance spread throughout the room, she safely delivered a jade-like baby girl of exceptional beauty and disposition. The Overseer and his wife named the girl Changhwa and loved her dearly, treating her as if she were a precious jewel.

A year after Changhwa was born, Mrs. Chang gave birth a second time. Night and day, the Overseer and his wife hoped they would have a son, but again, she gave birth to a daughter. In their hearts, they could not help but see this as inauspicious. They named the girl Hongnyŏn. As Changhwa and Hongnyŏn grew older they became ever more comely. Their personalities were outstanding and their filial behavior was even more exceptional. The love the Overseer and his wife felt for them as they watched them grow up was incomparable. However, they were deeply worried by how precocious the two girls were.

But eventually their fortunes changed and Mrs. Chang suddenly fell ill and took to her bed. The Overseer, Changhwa, and her sister did their utmost for her, preparing medicine day and night, but it did no good and her symptoms only worsened. Changhwa could not rest and constantly beseeched Heaven for her mother's recovery, but Mrs. Chang's health declined. Taking her two daughters by their hands, she sadly beseeched her husband saying, "This insignificant woman must have committed many crimes in her previous life and so cannot live long in this world. It is not a sad thing to die, but if I should perish when there is no one to raise Changhwa and her sister, my sorrow will be so great that I cannot close my eyes in peace. Now I will die with this bitter grudge deep within my spirit. This lonely soul does not desire much, but fears that after she dies her dear husband will take another woman and then his heart will gradually change. What this insignificant woman desires is that he will not forget her last words and will think of our life together. Please have pity and raise these two girls and once they have grown up find perfect matches for their spouses and thus connect them to good families. If you do this, though this insignificant woman is in the dark netherworld, she will rejoice at your grace, for which you will be repaid in full." She then groaned, and after a moment, breathed her last.

Changhwa embraced her little sister, looked up to heaven, and cried bitterly. Those who saw this pathetic scene felt as if their hearts had been torn apart. Eventually, the day of the funeral arrived and Mrs. Chang was interred in the family plot. Changhwa offered a bountiful meal to her late mother in the morning and evening and grieved over her death night and day. Time passed and so did the three periods of mourning, but Changhwa and her sister's great sorrow was only felt anew and more deeply.

At this time, the Overseer thought of his late wife's words, but he had no means of siring an heir and so sought a wife. But as there was no one who wanted him, he had no choice but to marry a woman named Hŏ. If one were to

speak of Mrs. Hŏ's appearance, one would say that her cheeks protruded, her eyes bulged out like a bug's, her nose was like that of someone who had suffered from smallpox, her lips were like those of a catfish, and her hair like that of a pig. She was as tall as the poles of the tutelary spirits that stand at the entrance of a village. Her voice was like that of a wolf. Moreover, her waist was as wide as the length of two arms and her legs were swollen with dropsy. If her mouth were cut up, it would fill more than ten bowls and her face was covered in smallpox scars as big as beans. She was difficult to even look at, and as she chose to behave in an inhuman manner, it was impossible to tolerate her for even a moment.

Despite being such a woman, from the month she entered his house, she became pregnant, and in succession gave birth to three sons. Because of this, the Overseer was not sure what he should do. He always thought of his daughters together with his deceased good wife. If he went without seeing his daughters for even a short while, he felt as if three years had passed and went to their rooms, took them by the hands, and with tears flowing said, "That you sisters remain secluded in your bedroom missing your mother greatly saddens your old father every day" and considered it a great pity. Mrs. Hŏ saw this and flew into a jealous rage and plotted a way to harm Changhwa and Hongnyŏn. The Overseer saw what she was up to, summoned her, and berated her, "My family was originally poor, but due to my late wife's wealth, you and I are well off. What you eat was originally all my former wife's property. It is proper that you should think of that grace and be moved, but without reason you seek to harm those young ones. Don't do something so terrible again." He thus tried to gently reason with her, but how can a greedy and ruthless woman change her ways? So she became all the more wicked and day and night harbored a desire to kill Changhwa and her sister.

One day the Overseer entered the women's quarters and sat in his daughters' room. He looked at them and saw that the two sisters, deeply sad, held each other's hands, their tears having soaked their collars. The Overseer, seeing this sight, was moved with pity, sighed, and said, "Certainly you are crying because you are sad thinking of your late mother," and he too wept. He then comforted them, saying, "You two have grown up. If your mother had lived, how happy would you be? However, you were ill fated and ended up with a step-mother like Mrs. Hŏ who abuses you so. I can only guess as to how sad you must be. If something should happen in the future, I will handle it, so please rest easy."

While all this was transpiring, that evil woman Mrs. Hŏ was standing between the window and the doorway and was infuriated by what she heard. In an instant, she came up with a wicked plan. She called her son Changsoe and had him catch a big rat and bring it to her. She spread its blood all over its body to make it

appear to be an aborted baby. She then went into the room where Changhwa slept and hid it under her blanket and waited for the Overseer to return to show him what she had done. At that moment, he entered. When Mrs. Hō saw this, her face became serious and she clucked her tongue. The Overseer thought the scene strange and asked what had happened.

Mrs. Hō responded “Even though some evil misfortune has arisen, since my dear husband would surely consider it to be the result of this lowly wife’s plot to do harm, I did not dare to speak. As for my dear husband, outwardly you pretend not to care for your two daughters, but then you visit and embrace them. However, they did not appreciate your attention and did many unchaste things. As I am not their real mother, I could only guess. However, today Changhwa did not get up until late, so I went to see if she was sick. I found out that in reality she had had an abortion and had laid down to recover. She was surprised and so did not have time to hide the evidence of what she had done. This insignificant woman was shocked by this. For now only you and I know it, but we have been members of the gentry going back for generations, so if word of this were to spread, how could we face the world? The Overseer was astonished at this, took his wife by the hand, entered his daughters’ room, and removed the blanket from the bed where Changhwa and her sister were fast asleep. Mrs. Hō wildly grabbed the blood-covered corpse of the rat and showed it to him. Perplexed, the Overseer failed to see through her evil plot and with surprise groaned “How could such a thing come to pass?”

At his words that evil woman then pretended to be truly upset and lied, “This is a serious matter. If Changhwa were killed to remove the evidence of her pregnancy and abortion without anyone knowing about it people would think that this insignificant woman was terribly cruel and had been plotting to kill this brat of your former wife. But if other people know about this, how can we escape shame? It would have been better if this insignificant woman had died and learned nothing about it.”

The foolish Overseer failed to see through her plot and rushed up and grabbed ahold of her, beseeching her saying “I now know that you are truly virtuous. Quickly tell me what I should do to punish this daughter of mine.” Though she pretended to weep, on hearing these words, that evil woman thought “The time has come for me to realize my desire!”

While she was inwardly happy, outwardly she groaned and continued, “Though I said I should die rather than know this, now that you are concerned I must endure. If that girl is not killed then it will not be possible to escape the disgrace that will come to our very doorstep. We are in a truly precarious

predicament, so this girl must quickly be punished with death so this affair does not come to light.”

The Overseer thought of the parting words of his late wife and was moved for a moment, but then he became angry and began to plan how to punish Changhwa. With great joy that evil woman said, “This is my plan. Summon Changhwa and trick her by saying that she must visit the home of her maternal uncle and aunt. I will order Changsoe to go with her and he will push her into a lake where she will drown. The Overseer heard this and thought it was the right thing to do so he called Changsoe and told him of the scheme and asked him to participate in it.

Shortly before this, the two young ladies were thinking of their dead mother. Unable to contain their sadness, they slept deeply—how could they know of the machinations of that evil woman? Eventually, Changhwa roused herself from her slumber. She found it strange that she was so languid in body and gloomy in mind and, as she could no longer sleep, she sat up in her bed. At this time, Changhwa’s father called for her and she, surprised, went to him. He said “You must go visit your maternal uncle’s house. It is not far and you will return soon.”

Changhwa said “Since mother passed away, I have not seen anything of the outside world because I have not left this house. So how am I now asked to travel down a road I do not know late at night?” The Overseer was angered at this and scolded her, “Changsoe will accompany you so stop talking back and obey your father’s orders.” Upon hearing this, Changhwa sobbed loudly and said, “How could I disobey even an order to die from my father? It is just because it is so late at night that I pleaded childishly. Since you have sternly scolded me, I feel guilty and will obey, but I ask as a favor that I be allowed to leave at daybreak rather than tonight.”

The Overseer was perplexed by this response and his child’s affection for him caused him to hesitate. That evil woman heard Changhwa’s words and suddenly kicked open the door and scolded her saying “It is right that you should obey your father’s commands. How can you speak thusly to him and disobey his instructions?” Changhwa, hearing this, became even sadder, and sobbed, “If that is my father’s command then there is no need to ask again. I will do as I have been told.”

She then entered her bedroom and called her sister Hongnyŏn. Taking her by the hand while weeping Changhwa said, “I cannot understand father’s desire and why he wishes me to go out in the middle of the night to his in-laws’ house. I do not want to go as this journey bodes ill. I am sad at heart, for since our mother’s passing we have lived together relying on each other and have not been parted for even a moment—and now this unexpected thing has happened. When I

think of leaving you alone in this lonesome and empty room, my heart aches and my insides are twisted around so badly that even were I to have all day, I could not record all of what I feel. Take care of yourself. Though my path does seem ill-omened, if everything goes well, I will be back soon. Should you miss me, remember that we will have a happy reunion in the future. I will change my clothes and go.”

After she changed her clothes, Changhwa again took her sister’s hands, wept, and admonished her, “You must serve father and stepmother obediently without any mistakes while awaiting my return. I will not be gone long and will come back in a few days. During that time, I will miss you from the bottom of my heart. But do not be sad. Take care of yourself.”

When she finished speaking she wailed loudly, grabbed her sister’s hands, and could not bring herself to release them. How sad! While she lived, there was no limit to their mother’s love, so how could she not see what was happening to her daughters?

At this time, the evil woman was outside and heard Changhwa’s pitiful wailing and called out in her wolf-like voice, “What are you carrying on about so noisily?” She then summoned Changsoe and said “What are you doing just standing there? Quickly take your sister to your uncle’s home and then return.” And so, pig-like Changsoe came shambling across the floor straightaway, his shoulders dancing to his mother’s voice, shouting like a thunderclap as if he had received an order from the King of the Dead himself, “Older sister, come along quickly. If you disobey your father’s order I will also get scolded and will be bitter about it.”

So strongly did Changsoe urge her that Changhwa had no choice but to let go of Hongnyōn’s hands and come out. But Hongnyōn clung to the hem of her older sister’s skirt and, as she followed her, cried, “We sisters have never been parted for even a moment and tonight you will leave me and go somewhere else!” Changhwa, seeing Hongnyōn like this felt as if her heart was breaking but could do nothing but seek to calm her sister saying “I will be gone just a short while. Do not cry. Be well.” Changhwa wanted to continue but then almost fainted and could not. Among the servants who witnessed this there was not one who did not weep.

Hongnyōn held tightly to her sister’s skirt and would not release it until that evil woman suddenly came at her. She pried Hongnyōn from her sister and scolded her, “Your sister is just going to my older brother’s house. Why are you carrying on as if she is going off to die?” That evil woman then exchanged a knowing glance with Changsoe, who pressed Changhwa on. Changhwa then

reluctantly parted from Hongnyŏn and bade farewell to her father, crying as she left.

Changsoe quickly guided Changhwa's horse to a ravine. The mountains were piled high and the still water was tranquil. The plants and trees grew thickly, and there were dense groves of pine. There were no signs of other people, only the silvery moon shining as the mournful cries of cuckoos pierced their hearts. Changhwa looked and could see a lake that was at least a dozen miles around and whose depth was unfathomable. Amidst the forlorn sound of the water lapping against the bank she felt anxious. Suddenly, Changsoe grabbed Changhwa's horse and told her to get off. Changhwa was astonished and said, "Why are you asking me to dismount here?" Changsoe responded, "How can you ask me such a question? Do you not know what crime you have committed? You were told that you would be going to your in-laws' home but that was a trick. You have done a lot of bad things. Your step-mother is kind, so she pretended not to know. But now that your abortion has been revealed, I was ordered to take you here and throw you into this lake. And now that we are here, that is just what I am going to do."

Changhwa was so struck by this sudden revelation that she nearly lost her senses and wailed, "As Heaven is my witness, why is this happening to me? For what reason was I sent down to suffer this false and unjust charge, be drowned in this deep lake, and so, unable to prove my innocence, become a hopeless wandering spirit? Look upon me Heaven! Surely my crimes in my former life must have been great that I would, without knowing the world outside the gates of my home, tonight suffer this false charge and leave this life? How could our mother die and leave this sad existence while this unhappy person falls victim to a cruel plot? It is not sad that I should die like a butterfly that is burned by a lantern's flame, but how long will it be before I am exonerated from this grievously false charge? What shall be the fate of my sister who will be left on her own?" And then Changhwa wailed and fainted.

Though that scene would have made even a stone-hearted person sad, that wicked and cruel brute Changsoe just grabbed her and said "Deep at night, in this dreary mountain, no matter how much you might struggle, I will throw you in the lake and you will die." At this, Changhwa regained her senses and said, "You must listen to my pitiful pleas. We are half-brother and sister so we share the flesh and blood of our father. Think of the affection we have had for each other as siblings. Would it not be a pity for me to now go forever into the netherworld? If you give me more time, I will go to my paternal aunt and uncle's house and bid farewell to my late mother's grave and ask her spirit to take care of lonely Hongnyŏn and comfort her. I am not doing this to save my life, since, if I

reveal the truth, my stepmother's jealousy will become even greater, making death better than staying alive by disobeying my father's orders. So I am willing to return and die here if you will spare me for only a short time. Her sad voice and desperate pleas were to no avail, for on the face of that unfeeling brute Changsoe there was no sign of pity. And at last, ignoring her pleas, he pressed himself upon her.

With even more pitiful words, Changhwa looked up to the sky and said, "Heaven, look upon me, suffering for evil acts I did not commit! Alas, it is my sad fate that I should lose my mother at the age of seven and that we two sisters should have to rely only upon one another. When the sun set behind the western mountains and I would face the moon rising in the east, my heart would grow sad, and when I saw the grass growing amidst the stones and the blooming flowers in the back garden¹¹ I was sorrowful and the tears would flow down like rain. After three years, a wicked step-mother entered our house and her abuse grew so cruel that I could not banish the deep sorrow in my heart. When the day was bright, I followed my father, and when the sun set, I thought of my mother. My sister and I, with deep sighs and stifled groans, would hold each other's hands on the long summer days and still autumn nights. But I could not escape the vile clutches of this fiendish villain and tonight I will be drowned in this lake so I must ask the Heavens and the earth, the sun and the moon, and the stars and the planets to prove my innocence. Please think of Hongnyŏn's life as precious and do not let her suffer the same fate as me."

Changhwa then turned to Changsoe, looked at him, and said, "I die innocent. I ask that you please think well of Hongnyŏn, who will be all the more lonely [once I am gone], and guide her well so that she will not commit any sins against her parents. Please be filial to our parents so that they may live to be one-hundred years old." She then held up her skirt with her left hand, took off her earrings with her right, and removed her shoes and put them on the bank of the lake. She stomped her feet as her tears fell like rain. Turning to the path she had come down, she wailed as if she had lost her mind, "Hongnyŏn! You will be sitting in an empty room all by yourself. Who will you rely on during the night? Dying before you is breaking my heart!

When she finished, Changhwa plunged into the endless expanse of water as if she had flown in. What a pity! Suddenly, a great wave reached up to heaven, a chill wind blew, the light of the moon dimmed, and from the mountains came a great tiger who growled, "Your mother plotted against an innocent child and killed her. Did you really think Heaven would be indifferent to such evil?" The

¹¹ It is implied that the garden has become overgrown because the mother is no longer there to tend it.

tiger ran down Changsoe and devoured his two ears, one of his arms, and one of his legs. He fell to the ground and passed out, and as he did so, the horse that Changhwa had ridden took fright and returned home.

The wicked woman who had sent Changsoe off into the deep night thought it very strange that he had not yet returned. Then, when the horse that Changhwa had been riding on galloped towards the Overseer's house and whinnied loudly, she thought that her son had killed her and was returning. But as that wicked woman looked out of the door, she saw that no one was there—only the horse covered with sweat. She was so shocked that she called her maidservants to fetch lanterns and ordered them to find out where the horse had come from.

Eventually the maidservants reached the place where Changsoe had fainted, and looking around, they were shocked to find his unconscious body covered in blood and missing its ears, one arm, and one leg. Astonished, they did not understand what had happened. Moreover, a sweet fragrance suddenly wafted through the area, along with a chill wind. They thought it very strange. They looked all over, and discovered that the fragrance arose from the middle of the lake. The maidservants, having found Changsoe, brought him back. His mother was shocked and immediately gave him medicine and bound up his wounds. At last he regained consciousness. His mother was very happy and asked him what had happened. He told her everything, and she became even angrier and began to plot day and night how she could kill Hongnyōn. Because of this, the Overseer soon realized that Changhwa had died an innocent. He lamented this greatly and his sorrow was immeasurable.

Hongnyōn did not know anything about this and when she witnessed all the commotion in the house she thought it was very strange and asked her step-mother what had happened. She responded, "Changsoe was escorting your wicked older sister down the path when he happened upon a tiger that attacked and injured him." But Hongnyōn again questioned her, and that evil woman scowled at her and said, "Why do you keep bothering me with foolish questions?" And because she rose up forcefully and treated Hongnyōn so rudely, the young girl began to tremble as if she would fall to pieces and returned to her room where she called for her sister and sobbed and moaned until at last she fell asleep.

Later as she lay half-awake, half-asleep, Hongnyōn saw Changhwa riding a yellow dragon towards the northern shore of the lake. She followed and called for her sister, but Changhwa acted as if she did not hear her. Hongnyōn sobbed, "Older Sister, how can you act as if you do not see me? Where are you going alone?" Only then did Changhwa begin to weep copiously, saying "Now we must go our separate ways. I must follow the orders of the Great Jade Emperor and go

to Samsin Mountain to gather medicine for him. I cannot tarry and should hurry on my way. Do not be disappointed with me. In the future there will come a time when I will come and get you.”

With that, the dragon Changhwa was riding roared, and Hongnyŏn awoke—it had just been a dream. She felt cold but was covered in sweat. Saddened, Hongnyŏn went to her father and, sobbing loudly, told him about it and said, “Today, it feels as if this little girl’s heart has lost something so naturally I am sad. It seems like something must have happened and someone has hurt Changhwa.” The Overseer heard what his daughter said and could not speak but only cry. The wicked woman was at his side and she flew into a rage saying, “What could a child say that could make her parents so sad?” as she shoved Hongnyŏn out of the room. Hongnyŏn cried and thought, “Why is it that when I asked my father about my dream he became so sad and could not speak? Why is it that Mrs. Hŏ’s face should change its appearance so quickly and she should become so angry? What is going on?” But though she sought to understand, she could not discover the truth.

One day, when that wicked woman was not around, Hongnyŏn called Changsoe and asked him about their older sister’s whereabouts. Changsoe did not dare to trick her, but instead told her everything. She was so shocked to learn of her innocent sister’s death that she fainted. When she recovered her senses, she sadly called out to her older sister, “My pitiful sister! That vile, coldhearted woman! My poor sister! That wicked woman! My ill-fated sister! How could you abandon this lonely girl in a silent room to die in such a deep lake and become a sorrowful ghost? Even when a person lives out the expected number of years, people still think that life is too short. But my sister died so cruelly while young without proving her innocence. Has there ever been, or will there ever be, such a bitter story? Heaven—please consider my plight! As a little girl of three I lost my mother and lived my life depending on my sister. Now due to the grievous sins of my former life I am suffering misfortune in this one. I am left alone, with no one to reply upon. Now I suffer this bitterness. It would have been better if I had died with my sister without this humiliation so that I would not resent others. I sincerely desire death. If I am granted what I wish, then this lonely spirit will be able to be together with her sister.” When she had finished, her tears fell like rain, and she became gloomy. She wanted to go and find the place where her sister had died, but as a maiden she knew nothing of the paths outside her door. How could she find it? So she simply ceased to eat and sleep and sighed late into the night.

One day, a bluebird flew towards her and flitted here and there among the blooming flowers. Hongnyŏn wondered to herself, “I have been sad thinking day

and night of where my sister may have died. Perhaps, though it is small, in its comings and goings this bird intends to lead me to her.” Unable to bear that sadness, she felt ill at ease. And then suddenly, she looked up and the bluebird was gone. She could not help but feel hurt.

On another bright day, Hongnyŏn again waited for the bluebird to come, but it never did. Unable to endure her sadness, she wailed the whole day. Then, as night fell, she leaned on her window and thought, “Even though the bluebird has not come, I want to find where my sister died, but if I tell father, he will not let me go, so I will write out what has happened for others to see.” She therefore wrote the following note and left it to be found, “How sad! Early in life we parted from our mother and grew up relying upon each other. My older sister died innocently, but suffered disgrace. How can I not be sad and lament this? We sisters lived together under the same roof for ten years. A few days ago I learned something that I could never have dreamed of, that my sister was falsely accused and died. I will never again be able to see my father’s face or hear his voice. How can I not be resentful? As this unworthy Hongnyŏn writes this, she is weeping and sick at heart. Father, please do not be troubled by your unworthy daughter. I bid you farewell and hope that my parents will live long and healthy lives.”

At this time, the night was deep and the moon shone down on the world as the night breeze blew cold and lonely. Suddenly the bluebird flew up and landed on a branch and began to sing as if it were greeting Hongnyŏn. She looked at it and said, “Though you might just be a bird, perhaps you have come to tell me where my sister is?” The bird acted as if it was listening to her, so Hongnyŏn said, “I will follow you if you will show me the way and take me to my sister.” The bluebird cocked its head, seemingly in response to her query, so Hongnyŏn said, “Please wait a moment and I will be right back so that we can go together.” She then hung her letter on the wall and left her room, crying for a time and saying, “Oh, my ill-fated destiny! Now I leave this house, but will I ever see its front door again?” And so she followed the bird.

Hongnyŏn had not gone far when gradually the east began to brighten as the sun rose. In those deep, deep mountains, the golden orioles sang of the ninety days of spring, making the sad heart even sadder. The bluebird stopped at the bank of the lake and Hongnyŏn looked around to her left and right, when suddenly, from a dense, multi-colored mist above the water came a sad voice that called to her saying, “What crimes have you committed that you would come to a place like this to needlessly throw away your life, as valuable as the most precious treasure? Once a person dies, she cannot live again. Poor Hongnyŏn! It is hard to know what will happen in this world. Do not think again about coming here but instead quickly go home and serve our parents, meet a wise gentleman, give birth

to both sons and daughters, raise them up, and comfort the soul of our departed mother.”

Hongnyōn recognized the voice of her sister and called out to her, “Older sister, what sin of your former life was it that caused you to leave me and come and remain in this place on your own? Bereft of my sister, how can I survive alone? I want to go up to you so that we can be together.” She listened again and the sad voice from within the fog did not cease sobbing. Crying sadly, Hongnyōn became gloomier and lost control of her emotions. When she regained her composure, she said, “A hundred times I wish that my sister’s disgrace was washed away. Heaven and Earth! Look down upon this unwarranted and sorrowful grudge of Hongnyōn and resolve it!” When she cried out, it was September, the wind was clear and the moon was bright, and in the deep mountains various wild animals were crying out plaintively, making the sad person’s heart all the more sorrowful. The voice from within the mist calling to Hongnyōn made her feel dizzy. She grasped her skirt in her right hand and then dove into the water as if she were flying. How sad! How heart breaking! The moonlight had no color, and from within the mist on top of the water the sad sound of crying continued day and night, telling in detail of how the girls had died as innocents because of their step-mother’s evil plot so that even those who were near and far away could know everything.

Changhwa and Hongnyōn were so embittered that they wandered the nether world¹² and kept going to the local government office to tell of their sorrowful situation, but when they did, the magistrate was so shocked that he fell unconscious and died. This kept happening and the county government ceased to function. Every year the farming was poor so the people, being on the verge of starvation, scattered to the winds, and the whole district became desolate. Many reports were submitted about this and the king was very concerned, but opinion within the government about what to do was divided.

One day, a man named Chōng Tongho volunteered to serve as magistrate there. The king, hearing that he was an upright man, took him into service and gave him the following orders, “For some reason, the government of Ch’ōlsan County has ceased to function. This has caused me great worry. Fortunately, you have volunteered to serve there, an admirable decision. I am concerned so you must be very careful and take care of the people there.” He appointed Chōng magistrate, and the man thanked the king and withdrew.

Chōng immediately left for his post, and once he arrived, he summoned his secretary and asked him, “I have heard that all the officials who come to your

¹² This is a place where the souls of those who died falsely accused go. They cannot leave until their names are cleared.

town die shortly after they arrive. Is that right?” The secretary responded, “Indeed it is. For the last five or six years, on the first night of every official’s term, he had an unfathomable dream while he was half-asleep and died, so it is not clear just what killed him.” After the magistrate heard all of this, he commanded the green-uniformed officers, “Tonight you are to put out the lights and stay awake on watch.” After receiving his orders, the secretary left.

Thereupon the magistrate went to his official quarters, lit a lamp, and began to read *The Book of Changes* until late into the night. Suddenly, a chill wind blew, and without knowing why, he felt as if he was being pulled out of his body. Then, as if out of nowhere, a beautiful woman wearing a green jacket and red skirt opened the door, entered his room, and bowed. The magistrate gathered his wits and asked, “What sort of woman comes here so late at night? What is it that you have to tell me?”

The beautiful woman raised her head, stood up, and then bowed again and told her story to the magistrate, “I am Hongnyŏn, a daughter of Overseer Pae who lives in this district. The year that I turned four and my elder sister Changhwa turned six, our mother passed away and we lived in the world relying on our father. He remarried a woman who looked like no one else but acted craftily and became close to him. She gave birth to three sons so our father became infatuated with her and she slandered us and treated us badly. Though this treatment became worse and worse, we served her as kindly as if she were our mother. We sisters grew up to be pretty and talented and our father loved us as no other. Whenever there was an attempt to find spouses for us, our fierce step-mother became incredibly jealous, and so even by the age of twenty we were not able to marry. And so we became vengeful ghosts. That is the sole reason why we are doing this. Our mother possessed hundreds of slaves and land yielding thousands of sacks of rice. Her treasures were beyond measure. That second wife thought that when we married we would take all of that property with us and so day and night she plotted to kill us so that she could seize it and give it to her own three sons. She herself hatched a wicked plot and skinned a rat and covered it in a great deal of blood to make it appear to be an aborted baby. She then hid it under my older sister’s blanket and tricked my father into believing she had committed an evil act. Thereupon they falsely claimed that they were sending my older sister to our stepmother’s brother’s home, but as she traveled there, that brute Changsoe, who was escorting her, suddenly grabbed her horse, pulled her down, and threw her into the pond where she drowned. I learned of what happened and was sorely grieved by it. Thinking of it made me believe that I would just live a pitiful life with my step-mother evilly plotting to kill me and therefore I drowned myself in the same place as my sister. Though I

do not mourn my own death, I am resentful that I have not been able to prove that my older sister has been falsely accused. I have been coming to inform the magistrates of this bitter plight but they all were frightened to death and I could not resolve this bone-deep grudge of mine. But now, by the grace of Heaven, I have dared to tell you, oh illustrious magistrate, of our sorrowful situation. Please, honorable magistrate, think kindly of this girl's pitiful soul and resolve my grudge by exonerating my older sister of this false charge. If you do that, this town will be safe and enjoy peace." She then bid the magistrate farewell and left. He found this strange and thought to himself, "So this is the origin of the problems that caused the district to cease functioning."

On the morning of the following day he went to the magistrate's office and summoned his secretary:

"Is there someone in this district named Overseer Pae?"

The secretary responded, "Yes, there is indeed a member of the gentry named Overseer Pae."

The magistrate again questioned him, "How many children did he have by his wives?"

The secretary answered, "He had two daughters but they died early. He has three sons who still live."

The magistrate inquired, "How did the two daughters die?"

The secretary answered, "I do not know all the details, but it is said that the oldest daughter did something terrible and drowned herself in a lake. That depressed her younger sister so much that she cried night and day until finally she went to the lake where her sister had drowned and threw herself in and died. At once she became a vengeful ghost and every night sits on the bank of the lake and cries, 'Our stepmother plotted against my sister and slandered her, leading to her death.' There are many such stories and those who hear them are all moved to tears."

The magistrate listened to all of this and then looked at his staff and commanded them, "Go out and bring me Overseer Pae and Mrs. Hŏ." The staff obeyed his orders and quickly brought them to him.

The magistrate asked Overseer Pae, "Is it correct that you had two daughters by your late wife and three sons by your current wife?"

The Overseer responded, "Yes."

The magistrate inquired, "Are they all alive?"

The Overseer answered, "My two daughters fell ill and died. Only my three sons still live."

The magistrate stated, “If you tell me truly what illness took your daughters’ lives you can escape with your life. Otherwise you will be beaten to death.”

When the Overseer heard this, his face became ashen and he could not say anything. The wicked woman also heard this and was shocked but she kept her wits about her and said, “Your honor must already know the truth so how can we attempt to deceive you even in the slightest? Those two daughters of my husband’s former wife grew up. The eldest acted badly and became pregnant. Lest this be known, the servants secretly gave her medicine and she aborted the child. I summoned her and scolded her, but worrying that other people would think I was wickedly scheming against her as her step-mother, I said, ‘Your sin is great and you deserve death but if I kill you people will think ill of me so I will forgive you. In the future, you must not do anything like this again. You must cultivate your moral character. If people knew of this, our house would suffer scorn. If that happened, we would be ashamed in front of others.’ Since I knew of her sin, she felt shame in front of her parents, and went out late at night on her own to the lake and drowned herself. Her younger sister Hongnyōn imitated her sister’s bad acts and she fled in the middle of the night several years ago. Not only do we not know what became of her, we could not look for her out of fear that people would talk about how this child of the gentry had acted so scandalously. We have not set eyes on her since that time.”

The magistrate listened to this and then said, “If what you say is true, perhaps you could produce evidence of the abortion?” That wicked woman responded, “Since that girl is not my flesh and blood I thought this might happen. I therefore stored away evidence of the abortion and brought it with me.” She then reached inside her jacket and showed “clear proof” to the magistrate (the corpse of the “baby”), who then gave the following command, “There is no conflict between what she has said and the facts. Much time has passed since the death of the sisters so it is not possible to explain everything clearly. Therefore I will think more about this and then settle matters. You are dismissed.”

That night, Changhwa and Hongnyōn appeared in front of the magistrate and exclaimed, “Beyond our wildest hopes we sisters met with your illustrious honor and hoped that our innocence could be proven. How then have you been misled by the cunning lies of that evil woman?” They cried sadly and again pleaded, “Your illustrious honor, please fully understand these girls and the situation. The legendary King Sun had also been entrapped by his step-mother and even a child knows of the grudge that pierces the bones of a daughter.¹³ Now, your honor has accepted this cruel step-mother’s words and failed to understand what was

¹³ King Sun (C. Shun) was one of the legendary Chinese emperors who treated his family members in a morally proper manner despite their own poor behavior towards him.

really happening. How can we not be vexed? I beg your honor to again summon that evil woman and ask her to show you the corpse of the “baby.” Once you cut open its stomach, then you will understand. We beseech you to take pity on these two sisters and carry out the law, but please forgive our father, for his character is good but he was tricked by that evil woman and could not see the truth.” When they finished speaking, they stood up, bowed, and mounted a white crane and soared into the air. The magistrate then understood that he had been tricked by that evil woman and was enraged.

He waited until daybreak and then ordered that the Overseer and his wife be brought to him immediately. He did not say anything about what had happened but only demanded to see the aborted child’s corpse. Because he knew that it would be clear on investigation that it was not really a child he gave the order with a stern voice to the Overseer to cut open its belly with a knife. The knife was brought and the belly slit open and behold, it was full of rat droppings. The officials and staff all saw this and understood completely that evil woman’s plot and each one spat and rebuked her. They now thought with pity of the death of the two sisters and began to weep.

The magistrate was incensed, ordered that a large cangue be placed upon that wicked woman and shouted in a loud voice, “Such a cunning and evil woman! You committed an abominable crime against your step-daughters and deceived me with your wicked words. However, I became suspicious and ordered that you be brought back in. What do you have to say now? You acted as if our country has no laws and killed the innocent children of the Overseer’s former wife. You must now tell me exactly what happened if you want to avoid suffering torture.”

The Overseer, witnessing this, without even thinking of how it would implicate him in the crime against the two sisters, repented of the death of his falsely accused children and began to weep, saying, “This insignificant man was ignorant of what really happened. Your honor, I will leave myself and my crime at your disposal. Though this unwise man is an Overseer in a rustic area, how can I not know of the way of the world and the dignity of the gentry? My former wife Mrs. Chang was extraordinarily wise and virtuous. Sadly, she passed away, and left me with two daughters. We lived comforting one another and relying upon each other. However, as I had no sons for posterity I had to take a second wife. She made me very happy by giving birth to three sons. However, one day I visited the inner quarters and when I did the look on that wicked woman’s face suddenly changed and she said, ‘My Lord, you have treated Changhwa like a precious treasure, but in reality, she has done great evil. She has had illicit sexual relations and had an abortion to cover them up.’ She then pulled off her blanket and to my shocked and darkened eyes, I thought I saw the corpse of the aborted

‘child.’ However, I was mistaken and failed to understand what was really happening. Tricked by that evil plot, I forgot my former wife’s last words, and took part in Changhwa’s murder. Truly, even if I were to die ten thousand times, it would not be enough to atone for my crime.”

Having said this, the Overseer then began to wail and cry piteously. The magistrate ordered him to stop and then had that evil woman tied to an interrogation chair and beaten. She could not endure this and confessed, “This humble married woman is from a family that for many generations was great but had fallen upon hard times. As my family’s fortune was on the wane we finally lost all of our property. Then the Overseer pleaded with me to marry him. The daughters he had by his first wife initially behaved with decorum. I raised them as if they were my own, but when Changhwa turned twenty, her actions became wicked. Though I said one hundred things to her, she acted as if she had not heard even one. She was insincere and resented me. They were on their guard against us, as if my sons and I were their enemy. I tried to persuade them to change and to, as much as possible, act like human beings should. One day I overheard those two sisters speaking secretly to each other and this humble woman learned of the disgusting crimes they had committed. This shocked and upset me but I thought if I revealed the truth of his two beloved daughters to my husband, he would have thought that this woman lied so I had to trick my lord. I caught a rat and smeared it in blood and hid it under Changhwa’s blanket and claimed that she had had an abortion. This humble woman brought her son Changsoe into this plot and told him to lure Changhwa to the lake and throw her in so that she would drown. Her little sister was so afraid of my wrath that she fled in the middle of the night. I expect to be punished in accordance with the law, but as this humble woman’s son Changsoe has already suffered divine punishment for his part by being struck ill, I ask that he be forgiven.”

Changsoe and his two younger brothers were immediately questioned and said, “We children do not have anything to add. We only request that we be killed instead of our parents.” The magistrate listened to the statements of the Overseer’s wife and Changsoe and his brothers and finally understood this evil but tragic story. At the same time, he thought with pity of the sorrowful death of Changhwa and her sister. He therefore said, “These are not typical criminals. I must not punish them at my own discretion.”

He reported this to the garrison and the provincial governor was so shocked at such an unheard of thing that he immediately reported it to the court. The king graciously looked into the matter and took pity on the sisters and said, “That evil woman is extraordinarily wicked and therefore as a warning to others must be cut into pieces. Her son Changsoe will be strangled. As redress to the souls of

Changhwa and her sister, a monument will be erected for them. Their father shall be released.” The governor received these orders and delivered them onto the district office of Ch’ölsan. The magistrate, acting in accordance with them, ordered that the wicked woman be hacked into pieces, that her son Changsoe be strangled, and that the Overseer be freed after being admonished.

The Overseer was made to kneel down and the magistrate rebuked him saying, “No matter how much you were deceived, how could you not have seen through the dark designs of that evil woman and helped kill your innocent children. You ought to be punished for your crime. However, as it is the desire of Hongnyön’s older sister, the king has ordered that you receive a special pardon. The Overseer was then released with his other two sons. On that same day, the magistrate personally brought his underlings to the lake where Changhwa and her sister had died. They dredged it and found the bodies of the two young ladies. They looked as if they were only sleeping—their faces had not changed in the slightest so that they appeared as if they were still alive. The magistrate, seeing this, considered it strange and had inner and outer coffins prepared and laid the two young women to rest in a singularly honorable manner. In front of their tomb he erected a monument upon which was written, “In memory of Changhwa and Hongnyön, the daughters of Pae Muryong of Ch’ölsan County of P’yöngan Province.”

When the magistrate finished with the funeral he returned [to his office] to deal with matters of state. He was momentarily fatigued by all of this and laid down in his bed and dozed off. Suddenly, Changhwa and her young sister entered, bowed, and respectfully said, “We girls met your honor and you resolved our bone-deep grudge, found our bodies, and forgave the crime of our father. We have discussed many things together. Mount T’ai is quite small and the rivers and seas shallow in comparison to your grace. Though it will merely be a trifle, we will repay you for what you have done. Soon you will be promoted. Please understand that this is because of our help. Do not forget this.” Immediately after she said this, the magistrate, surprised, awoke, and realized he had only been dreaming. However, from that month on, he was gradually promoted until he became Commander in Chief of the Naval Forces in the South. He knew this was the result of the help of Changhwa and her younger sister.

That wicked woman’s crimes could not be tolerated anywhere between heaven and earth and she and her son could not escape being executed for their crimes. Among the people of future generations, if there was a woman who became a second wife, she dearly loved the children of the previous wife as if they were her own, and no one even thought of doing what that wicked woman had done.

As for Overseer Pae, after the country had punished that wicked woman by hacking her to pieces and comforted the lonely souls of his two daughters, he knew no happiness. He was nearly mad with grief mourning the tragic deaths of his two innocent daughters. He prayed every day that if it were only possible he could resolve his grievances by restoring the tie between father and daughters in this world. As there was no one to make offerings in his house to the dead, he was sad and had to marry again. So he wed a country lass who was the daughter of Yun Kwangho. She was eighteen, and in appearance and virtue extraordinary. She was gentle by nature and wise. The Overseer was very happy and the feelings between husband and wife were proper and kind. They were a perfect match.

One night, the Overseer was in the men's quarters and, thinking earnestly of his two daughters, tossed and turned, unable to sleep. Suddenly, Changhwa and her younger sister appeared, looking rapturously beautiful. They bowed and said, "Truly our lives were ill-fated. We lost our mother early and because of some sins in our former life we had such a step-mother and in the end were falsely accused and departed from our father's house. We could not contain our grief and sorrow and told the Great Jade Emperor our tale of woe. The Emperor sympathized with us and said, 'Truly your situation is pitiable. Certainly, this is your fate. You are resentful and bitter about it. Since, your relationship to your father in the world has not been fulfilled you will return and be as daughters to your father and resolve each other's grudges.' He then commanded us to leave, but we could not fathom his intent." The Overseer came to embrace them in greeting, but when he did, a cock crowed and he awoke. He felt as if he had lost something, and could not calm his mind or body.

His third wife Mrs. Yun also had a dream. In hers, a fairy descended on a cloud and gave her two lotus flowers and said, "These are Changhwa and Hongnyŏn. The Great Jade Emperor took pity on them because they died falsely accused and will bless you, as you are the wife of Overseer Pae, by allowing you to become pregnant with them, so you must raise them well and witness their glory. At that instant, Mrs. Yun awoke holding the flowers. Their fragrance filled the room. She thought this was strange and told her husband what happened in her dream and asked, "What sort of people were Changhwa and Hongnyŏn?" The Overseer heard these words and looked at the flowers, which gently moved back and forth as if they were waving and thought that it must mean that he would meet his two daughters again. He started to cry and told Mrs. Yun all about the two sisters and that a few days ago he had a dream about them and that this was proof that she would give birth to the two girls again. They were both happy and placed the flowers in a jade vase in a closet lined with purple silk

and from time to time would look at and cherish them. Their sadness naturally faded away.

From that month Mrs. Yun felt as if she had become pregnant, and as she entered her tenth month, her belly became so large that it was clear that she would have twins. When she reached full term, she became tired, took to her bed, and finally delivered them. The Overseer quickly entered the room to comfort his wife and saw the newborn babies. Their appearance and disposition were like carved jade or a bouquet of flowers. They bore an uncanny resemblance to fairy children, and they looked just like those lotus flowers that they had placed in the vase. The Overseer was delighted and looked back at the flowers, but they had already disappeared. He thought that they must have transformed into the girls. The parents were overwhelmed with joy saying that Heaven had at last taken pity on those beautiful girls who had become vengeful spirits and had been sent back down into the world to reestablish the father-daughter relationship. They again named them “Changhwa” and “Hongnyŏn” and raised them as if they were precious jewels.

Time passed, and when they reached the age of three or four they were very beautiful and served their parents with filial devotion. They continued to mature gradually, and by the time they were fifteen, they were full of virtue and were so outstanding in their attributes that the love the Overseer and his wife had for them was matchless. They sent a matchmaker to obtain husbands for the girls, but they could not find suitable homes to marry them into. They were very worried. It was said that there were many suitable people in P’yŏngyang and it was a place where they could find a good match so they moved there.

In P’yŏngyang there was a man named Yi Yŏnho. He was well off but he had no children and was very sad. But, late in life, through a dream, Heaven told him that he would have twin sons. Their names were Yunp’il and Yunsŏk. They were now sixteen and handsome in appearance and outstanding in their literary achievements. People with eligible daughters would send go-betweens to their home in hopes that they would marry them. In choosing daughters-in-law, those parents were also uncommonly careful. When they heard that the daughters of Overseer Pae were most outstanding, they were ecstatic and proposed to them through a matchmaker. Both families came to an agreement and immediately gave their permission and a date around the middle of September was chosen for their marriage.

At this time, the whole world was at peace. On the occasion of an auspicious event in the country, a special examination was held. Yunp’il and his brother passed with top honors. The king was impressed with their praiseworthy talents and immediately appointed them to the Hallim Academy, making the brothers

archivists. They asked for a leave of absence and the king graciously granted their request.

Thus the brothers of the Hallim Academy returned home. Many observed them, and among those who did—who could not have praised them? As they presented their Red Certificates at the entrance of their home, their appearance looked all the more extraordinary.¹⁴ Their father Master Yi held a feast for them and invited their relatives and friends so that they could make merry together. The local magistrate sent musicians and food and the governor and the Assistant Capital Magistrate celebrated their having passed the special examination by sharing wine with them and toasting their success. Such glory had rarely been seen in the countryside.

Eventually, the day of the wedding arrived. There was a big celebration. The grooms, dressed in official attire and riding white horses, were surrounded by musicians as they proceeded to the brides' house. After the wedding ceremony there, the grooms, accompanied by the brides, returned home. The procession was so splendid that the envious cries of the onlookers seemed to shake heaven and the mountains. When the brides gave their first deep bow to their parents-in-law, they seemed as beautiful as silk and gemstones. The parents-in-law were overwhelmed with joy. Both sisters faithfully served their parents-in-law and respectfully obeyed their husbands.

Changhwa gave birth to two sons and one daughter. Her eldest son became a civil official, rising to the rank of prime minister. Her second son became a military official, rising to the rank of general. Hongnyŏn also gave birth to two sons. Her eldest son became an official and served in Chŏngnam. Her second son was an erudite scholar so he hid himself in a forest and communed with nature, playing the zither and enjoying books.

When Overseer Pae turned ninety, he received a position from the government as First Counsellor of the Ministers of State. And in this way he lived out the rest of his life, and when Mrs. Yun died, Changhwa and her sister mourned her. The parents of the Hallim brothers passed away and the brothers lived together and took care of their descendants. Changhwa and her sister died together at the age of seventy-three, and the Hallim brothers left the world at the age of seventy-five. Their family was prosperous and was blessed with wealth and many descendants.

In this world, the three bonds and the five relationships are the most important.¹⁵ If we think of what Mrs. Hŏ, the second wife of the Overseer, did,

¹⁴ The Red Certificates showed that they had won top honors on the exams.

¹⁵ The three bonds are those between ruler and subject, parent and child, and husband and wife, and the five relationships and their respective virtues are closeness between father and son, loyalty

we can see that she had the mind of a beast. Heaven's retaliation is like this: good is repaid with good and evil with evil. If you are the parent of someone else's child, keep this in mind.

FRANKLIN RAUSCH (frausch@lander.edu) *is an assistant professor in the Department of History and Philosophy in Lander University, USA.*

GILLIEAN LEE (glee@lander.edu) *is a professor of Computing in the Department of Mathematics and Computing in Lander University, USA.*

SUJIN LEE (SLe@aucotec.com) *is a marketer for Autotec.*

of the subject towards the ruler, differentiation between husband and wife, harmony between siblings, and trust between friends.