

## Exemplar Poetry - A Poem of Changgan

Li Po. "A Poem of Changgan." *The Jade Mountain: A Chinese Anthology*. Translated by Witter Bynner. New York: Knopf, 1929. (circa 700)

My hair had hardly covered my forehead.  
I was picking flowers, playing by my door,  
When you, my lover, on a bamboo horse,  
Came trotting in circles and throwing green plums.  
We lived near together on a lane in Ch'ang-kan,  
Both of us young and happy-hearted.  
...At fourteen I became your wife,  
So bashful that I dared not smile,  
And I lowered my head toward a dark corner  
And would not turn to your thousand calls;  
But at fifteen I straightened my brows and laughed,  
Learning that no dust could ever seal our love,  
That even unto death I would await you by my post  
And would never lose heart in the tower of silent watching.  
...Then when I was sixteen, you left on a long journey  
Through the Gorges of Ch'u-t'ang, of rock and whirling water.  
And then came the Fifth-month, more than I could bear,  
And I tried to hear the monkeys in your lofty far-off sky.  
Your footprints by our door, where I had watched you go,  
Were hidden, every one of them, under green moss,  
Hidden under moss too deep to sweep away.  
And the first autumn wind added fallen leaves.  
And now, in the Eighth-month, yellowing butterflies  
Hover, two by two, in our west-garden grasses  
And, because of all this, my heart is breaking  
And I fear for my bright cheeks, lest they fade.  
...Oh, at last, when you return through the three Pa districts,  
Send me a message home ahead!  
And I will come and meet you and will never mind the distance,  
All the way to Chang-feng Sha.