

**To the Ghost of Sung Yi: A Letter Found on His
Widow's Pillow**

Though you were dead,
I married you,
As required by the laws
Governing betrothals.
Never your wife,
I became your widow.

At our betrothal ceremony,
My fourteenth birthday,
We met for the first and only time.
Your chin was still smooth
And your flesh like fine ivory;
Your gentle eyes -
They alone won me.
In the following weeks
My father's concubines
Taught me the subtle arts of love
And the duties of wife.

On our wedding morning
Your lifeless body across your horse
Entered my courtyard to claim me.
(You had died hours before
Wounded in a border skirmish.)
No feasting followed the ceremony,
No music, no congratulations.
My father merely bowed and left me,
Now a member of your family.
Since I cannot bear you a son,
I will remain all my life
The lowliest of your family's servants.

Yet, my Lord,
Each night I sense you in my bed;
Each dawn wake weeping for you,
My body limp and wet with longing.
Surely no others loved more.

Since you cannot join me in life,
I shall join you in death.
Please seek me beneath the clear jade waters
Flowing past your mausoleum.

-May R. Kinsolving