

山鬼 - 屈原 (简体版)

shan- gui^ qu- yuan' jian' ti' ban'

The Mountain Spirit – by Qu Yuan

(Simplified Chinese script version)

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http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Mountain_Spirit_Simp.pdf

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NOTE

The author, Qu Yuan (340 BCE - 278 BCE), was the famous loyal minister of the state of Chu during the Warring States who was banished by his king for trying to dissuade him from taking a series of disastrous actions, and in whose honor the annual Chinese and Korean "Dragon Boat" or *Duan Wu* Festival is held. Qu Yuan is also a great poet in his own right - fortunately many of his works have survived.

TEXT

若有人兮山之阿，被薜荔¹兮带女萝²。

ruo` you^ ren' xi- shan- zhi- e- pi` bi` li` xi- dai` nv^ luo'

Lo, there's someone at the mountaintop, wearing fig leaf¹ clothing and dodder vine² ribbons.

既含睇兮又宜笑，子慕予³兮善窈窕。

ji` han' di` xi- you` yi' xiao` zi^ mu` yu' xi- shan` yao^ tiao^

She has both expressive eyes and a ready smile: "You admire me³, Sire, for being so elegant."

¹ 薜荔 *bi` li`*: this refers to *Ficus pumilis*, a member of the fig family. See *Ci Hai* ("Sea of Terms" 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 698.

² 女萝 *nv` luo'*: this is the same as 菟丝 *tu` si-* and therefore *Cuscuta chinensis* i.e. the twining dodder herb. See *Ci Hai* (*Sea of Terms* 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 673 and Wen Huai-Sha, *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* 文怀沙著《屈原九歌今释》 (*Qu Yuan's Nine Songs with Modern Explanation*), 上海古典文学出版社 (Shanghai Classical Works Publishers). Shanghai, 1956, p. 75.

³ 予 *yu'*: according to Wen Huai-Sha (文怀沙), the word here does not mean "I" as in normal classical usage but should be pronounced *shu-* and actually stands for the character 舒, such that along with the next character in the line, the term "慕舒" is formed, meaning "of a kind disposition". Then the whole sentence would mean "you are of kind disposition and very elegant". See Wen Huai-Sha, *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* 文怀沙著《屈原九歌今释》 Shanghai, 1956, pp. 75, 85, 86. I, however, find that way of stretching the word *yu'* 予 a bit difficult to accept, especially as it is used a second time later in this very work to unequivocally mean "I".

乘赤豹兮从文狸，辛夷⁴车兮结桂旗⁵。

cheng' chi' bao' xi- cong' wen' li' xin- yi' che- xi- jie' gui' qi'

She rides a red leopard and a wildcat follows; she has a cart of magnolia⁴ with a flag of miniature olive⁵,

被石兰⁶兮带杜衡⁷，折芳馨兮遗所思。

pi- shi' lan' xi- dai' du' heng' zhe' fang- xin- xi- wei' suo^ si-

She has orchids⁶ and wild ginger⁷ on; she breaks off a fragrant flower to give to the one she thinks about.

余处幽篁兮终不见天，路险难兮独后来。

yu' chu^ you- huang' xi- zhong- bu' jian` tian- lu` xian^ nan' xi- du' hou` lai'

“I live in the bamboo groves and never see the sky; the road was hard and I came late.”

表⁸独立兮山之上，云容容⁹兮而在下。

biao^ du' li' xi- shan- zhi- shang` yun' rong' rong' xi- er' zai` xia`

She stands out⁸, all alone, on top of the mountain; clouds billow⁹ beneath.

杳冥冥兮羌¹⁰昼晦，东风飘兮神灵雨。

⁴ 辛夷 *xin- yi'*: this is 木兰 *mu` lan'* and therefore *Magnolia liliflora* i.e. the flowering magnolia shrub. See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 2228 and p. 1400.

⁵ 桂 *gui'*: this is 桂花 *gui` hua-* also called 木犀 *mu` xi-* and is therefore *Osmanthus fragrans*, i.e. the devilwood or miniature olive shrub, which has very small flowers. See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 1458 and p. 1401.

⁶ 石兰 *shi' lan'*: *Ci Hai* would only say that 石兰 is a “fragrant herb (香草)”, while *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* says it's 山兰 i.e. *Cymbidium virescens*, an orchid. I choose “orchid”. See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 1841 and Wen Huai-Sha, *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* 文怀沙著《屈原九歌今释》, Shanghai, 1956, p. 75.

⁷ 杜衡 *du` heng'*: this is *Asarum forbesii* i.e. the pungent wild ginger herb according to *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 1412.

⁸ 表 *biao^*: *Ci Hai* says that 表 *biao^* in ancient writings can mean “standing out, distinctly tall” (“突出，屹然独立貌”). See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 1375.

⁹ 容容 *rong' rong'*: *Ci Hai* says that one (ancient) meaning of 容 is “something that covers up or hides (障蔽物)” and so I use “billow” to convey the opaqueness of the clouds. See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 2022.

yao[^] ming' ming' xi- qiang- zhou[^] hui[^] dong- feng- piao- xi- shen' ling' yu[^]
The day darkens and light disappears; the east wind wafts and the gods send rain.

留灵修¹¹兮憺忘归，岁即晏兮孰华予。

liu' ling' xiu- xi- dan[^] wang[^] gui- sui[^] ji[^] yan[^] xi- shu' hua' yu[^]
“Waiting for my lord¹¹, I am sad and forget returning home. The years will be late soon; what will make me beautiful?”

采三秀兮于¹²山间，石磊磊兮葛蔓蔓。

cai[^] san- xiu[^] xi- yu- shan- jian- shi' lei[^] lei[^] xi- ge' man[^] man[^]
She picks the Three Flowers in¹² the mountains. The rocks are many and piled; the vines are spread all over.

怨公子兮怅忘归，君思我兮不得闲。

yuan[^] gong- zi[^] xi- chang[^] wang[^] gui- jun- si- wo[^] xi- bu[^] de' xian[^]
“I blame you, Sire; I am desolate and I forget returning home. Perhaps you are thinking of me but you don't have time?”

山中人兮芳杜若¹³，饮石泉兮阴松柏。

shan- zhong- ren' xi- fang- du[^] ruo[^] yin[^] shi' quan' xi- yin- song- bai[^]
The person in the mountain is fragrant as the *Pollia* flowers¹³; she drinks from the spring in the rocks and finds shade under the spruce and pine.

¹⁰ 羌 *qiang*-: *Ci Hai* says that 羌 in ancient works such as ones by our author Qu Yuan, can be just a word used at the beginning of a clause to “help the sentence” and is devoid of much meaning other than “it is thus” (“作语助，用在句首，无义… 一说犹乃”). See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 2156.

¹¹ 灵修 *ling' xiu*-: while there are different interpretations of this sentence, such as that found in *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* by Wen Huai-Sha 《屈原九歌今释》文怀沙著 (*Qu Yuan's Nine Songs with Modern Explanation*), Shanghai, 1956, p. 71, I stick to the definition given by *Ci Hai* to *ling' xiu*- 灵修: sovereign (君王). Thus I use it here to mean sovereign in the figurative sense, i.e. “my lord” as might be used by a woman to address her husband. See *Ci Hai* (“Sea of Terms” 《辞海》), Shanghai 1989, p. 1202.

¹² According to Wen Huai-Sha *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* 文怀沙著 《屈原九歌今释》, Shanghai, 1956, p. 76 and p. 86, 於 here is not a preposition meaning “in” at all but should be pronounced *wu* and used in conjunction with the next character *shan* 山 to mean *wu shan* 巫山 or the Wu Mountains (near present day Chongqing city in Sichuan province). I find this a bit too far-fetched for my taste.

¹³ 杜若 *du' ruo* : this is *Pollia japonica*, a herbaceous plant with longish leaves and white flowers.

君思我兮然疑作¹⁴。

jun- si- wo^ xi- ran' yi' zuo`

"You are thinking of me, no?" Doubt suddenly arises¹⁴.

雷填填¹⁵兮雨冥冥，猿啾啾兮又¹⁶夜鸣。

lei' tian' tian' xi- yu' ming' ming' yuan' jiu- jiu- xi- you` ye` ming'

The thunder drums¹⁵ and the rain darkens; the apes go "jiu, jiu" and also¹⁵ cry at night.

风飒飒兮木萧萧，思公子兮徒离忧。

feng- sa` sa` xi- mu` xiao- xiao- si- gong- zi' xi- tu' li' you-

The wind goes "sa, sa" and the trees go "xiao, xiao": "I think of you, Sire; in vain I try to depart from my sorrow."

COMMENT

While historically Confucian scholars have interpreted this work to be an allegorical reference to a loyal minister to whom his king no longer listens, I think this can also be interpreted as a love poem pure and simple; the subject is merely the common theme of unrequited love. Except for the line about doubt arising, I do not see any line that can be interpreted as veiled allusions to the king-minister relation, the way I do in Qu Yuan's long poem *Li Su*, which also talks about unrequited love, though from the male's point of view. As in *Li Su*, this poem begins brightly but then there is the "arriving too late" and the mood turns melancholic - actually in *Li Su* it gets even worse and turns despondent. Like *Li Su*, this poem is also an evocative masterpiece.

REFERENCES

1. Wen Huai-Sha, *Qu Yuan Jiu Ge Jin Shi* 文懷沙著《屈原九歌今釋》 (*Qu Yuan's Nine Songs with Modern Explanation*), 上海古典文學出版社 (Shanghai Classical Works Publishers). Shanghai, 1956.
2. Zhu Quan 諸泉, *Chu Ci* 《楚辭》, Yunan University Press 雲南大學出版社, Kunming, 2004.
3. *Ci Hai* ("Sea of Terms" 《辭海》), Shanghai 1989.

¹⁴ An alternate interpretation of this line is "You did think of me but doubt arose."

¹⁵ 填 *tian'*: in ancient usage this word can mean the sound of drums according to *Ci Hai* 《辭海》, Shanghai 1989, p. 623.

¹⁶ 又 *you'*: according to Zhu Quan 諸泉 the word 又 *you'* meaning "also" should actually be the homonym 狢 *you'* meaning "a long tailed black ape mentioned in ancient works" as defined in *Ci Hai* 《辭海》, Shanghai 1989, p. 925. See Zhu Quan 諸泉, *Chu Ci* 《楚辭》, Yunan University Press 雲南大學出版社, Kunming, 2004, p. 35. I, however, think it unlikely that Qu Yuan would put in "apes" then would follow with a specific ape in the same breath. True, 狢 *you'* can also mean a certain wildcat but wildcat cries are not very loud.