

CHINESE LITERATURE



In this issue

MAO TSETUNG: POEMS

1976 **4**

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Chairman Mao Tsetung photograph by Li Chin

MAO TSETUNG POEMS

CHANGSHA

— to the tune of *Chin Yuan Chun*

1925

Alone I stand in the autumn cold
On the tip of Orange Island,
The Hsiang flowing northward;
I see a thousand hills crimsoned through
By their serried woods deep-dyed,
And a hundred barges vying
Over crystal blue waters.
Eagles cleave the air,
Fish glide in the limpid deep;
Under freezing skies a million creatures contend in
freedom.

Brooding over this immensity,
I ask, on this boundless land
Who rules over man's destiny?

I was here with a throng of companions,
Vivid yet those crowded months and years.
Young we were, schoolmates,
At life's full flowering;
Filled with student enthusiasm
Boldly we cast all restraints aside.
Pointing to our mountains and rivers,
Setting people afire with our words,
We counted the mighty no more than muck.
Remember still
How, venturing midstream, we struck the waters
And waves stayed the speeding boats?

YELLOW CRANE TOWER

— to the tune of *Pu Sa Man*

Spring 1927

Wide, wide flow the nine streams through the land,
Dark, dark threads the line from south to north.
Blurred in the thick haze of the misty rain
Tortoise and Snake hold the great river locked.

The yellow crane is gone, who knows whither?
Only this tower remains a haunt for visitors.
I pledge my wine to the surging torrent,
The tide of my heart swells with the waves.

CHINGKANGSHAN

— to the tune of *Hsi Chiang Yueh*

Autumn 1928

Below the hills fly our flags and banners,
Above the hilltops sound our bugles and drums.
The foe encircles us thousands strong,
Steadfastly we stand our ground.

Already our defence is iron-clad,
Now our wills unite like a fortress.
From Huangyangchieh roars the thunder of guns,
Word comes the enemy has fled into the night.

THE WARLORDS CLASH

— to the tune of *Ching Ping Yueh*

Autumn 1929

Sudden veer of wind and rain
Showering misery through the land,
The warlords are clashing anew —
Yet another Golden Millet Dream.

Red banners leap over the Ting River
Straight to Lungyen and Shanghang.
We have reclaimed part of the golden bowl
And land is being shared out with a will.

THE DOUBLE NINTH

— to the tune of *Tsai Sang Tzu*

October 1929

Man ages all too easily, not Heaven:
Year by year the Double Ninth returns.
On this Double Ninth,
The yellow blooms on the battlefield smell sweeter.

Each year the autumn wind blows fierce,
Unlike spring's splendour,
Yet surpassing spring's splendour,
See the endless expanse of frosty sky and water.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

— to the tune of *Ju Meng Ling*

January 1930

Ninghua, Chingliu, Kueihua —
What narrow paths, deep woods and slippery moss!
Whither are we bound today?
Straight to the foot of Wuyi Mountain.
To the mountain, the foot of the mountain,
Red flags stream in the wind in a blaze of glory.

ON THE KUANGCHANG ROAD

— to the tune of *Chien Tzu Mu Lan Hua*

February 1930

The whole wide world is white,
Through the snow eagerly we press on.
Craggs loom above our heads,
We cross the great pass, red flags waving in the wind.

Where are we bound?
To the snow-swept River Kan.
Yesterday the order was given,
One hundred thousand workers and peasants march
on Kian.

MARCH FROM TINGCHOW TO CHANGSHA

— to the tune of *Tieb Lien Hua*

July 1930

In June Heaven's armies chastise the corrupt and evil,
Seeking to bind roc and whale with a league-long cord.
Red glows the far side of the Kan,
Thanks to our wing under Huang Kung-lueh.

A million workers and peasants rise up,
Sweeping Kiangsi straight towards Hunan and Hu-
peh.
To the *Internationale's* stirring strains
A wild whirlwind swoops from the sky.

AGAINST THE FIRST “ENCIRCLEMENT” CAMPAIGN

— to the tune of *Yu Chia Ao*

Spring 1931

Forests blaze red beneath the frosty sky,
The wrath of Heaven's armies soars to the clouds.
Mist veils Lungkang, its thousand peaks blurred.
All cry out in unison:
Our van has taken Chang Hui-tsan!

The enemy returns to Kiangsi two hundred thousand
strong,
Fumes billowing in the wind in mid-sky.
Workers and peasants are wakened in their millions
To fight as one man,
Under the riot of red flags round the foot of Puchou!*

*AUTHOR'S NOTE:

The story of Kungkung butting against Mount Puchou:

The chapter “On Astronomy” in *Huai Nan Tzu* says: “In ancient times Kungkung and Chuanhsu fought each other for the throne. In a fit of rage Kungkung butted against Mount Puchou, breaking the pillars of heaven and snapping the ties of the earth. Then the sky shifted towards the northwest, tilting the sun, moon and stars; the earth sank in the southeast so that dust and water gathered there.”

“The Chronicle of Chou” in *Kuo Yu* says: “In ancient times Kungkung, departing from the right way, gave himself up to pleasure and unbridled licence. He tried to stem the hundred streams, destroy hills and silt up low places, and thus brought disasters to the whole earth. Heaven did not give its blessing, nor the people their help. Calamities and troubles broke out and Kungkung perished.” The ancient commentator Wei Chao quotes from the Palace Officer Chia, *i.e.*, Chia Kuei of the Later Han Dynasty: “Kungkung was a lord of the Chiang clan, a descendant of the Fiery Emperor. When Emperor Chuanhsu's power was on the decline, Kungkung attacked other vassal lords and fought Kaohsin for the throne.”

In “The Annals of the Three Emperors”, Szuma Chen's addenda to Szuma Chien's *Historical Records*, it is said: “Towards the end of her (Nuwa's) reign, a lord named Kungkung became powerful through his resourcefulness and the severe discipline he enforced. He did not rule like a king but like an autocrat. Representing the element of water, he wanted

to succeed Nuwa who represented the element of wood. He fought Chuyung and was defeated. In a fit of rage he knocked his head against Mount Puchou, so that the pillars of heaven were broken and the ties of the earth torn."

These are the different versions of the legend. I prefer the version in *Huai Nan Tzu*, which presents Kungkung as a victorious hero. Please note: "In a fit of rage Kungkung butted against Mount Puchou, breaking the pillars of heaven and snapping the ties of the earth. Then the sky shifted towards the northwest, tilting the sun, moon and stars; the earth sank in the southeast so that dust and water gathered there." Did Kungkung perish in the attempt? *Huai Nan Tzu* is silent on this question. We may take it that he did not, but came out victorious.

AGAINST THE SECOND "ENCIRCLEMENT" CAMPAIGN

— to the tune of *Yu Chia Ao*

Summer 1931

The very clouds foam atop White Cloud Mountain,
At its base the roar of battle quickens.
Withered trees and rotten stumps join in the fray.
A forest of rifles presses,
As the Flying General descends from the skies.

In fifteen days we have marched seven hundred *li*
Crossing misty Kan waters and green Fukien hills,
Rolling back the enemy as we would a mat.
A voice is heard wailing;
His "Bastion at every step" avails him nought!

TAPOTI

— to the tune of *Pu Sa Man*

Summer 1933

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet —
Who is dancing, waving this coloured ribbon against
the sky?

The sun returns slanting after the rain
And hill and pass grow a deeper blue.

A furious battle once raged here,
The village walls, bullet-scarred,
Now adorn hill and pass
And make them doubly fair.

HUICHANG

— to the tune of *Ching Ping Yueh*

Summer 1934

Soon dawn will break in the east.
Do not say “You start too early”;
Crossing these blue hills adds nothing to one’s years,
The landscape here is beyond compare.

Straight from the walls of Huichang lofty peaks,
Range after range, extend to the eastern seas.
Our soldiers point southward to Kwangtung
Looming lush and greener in the distance.

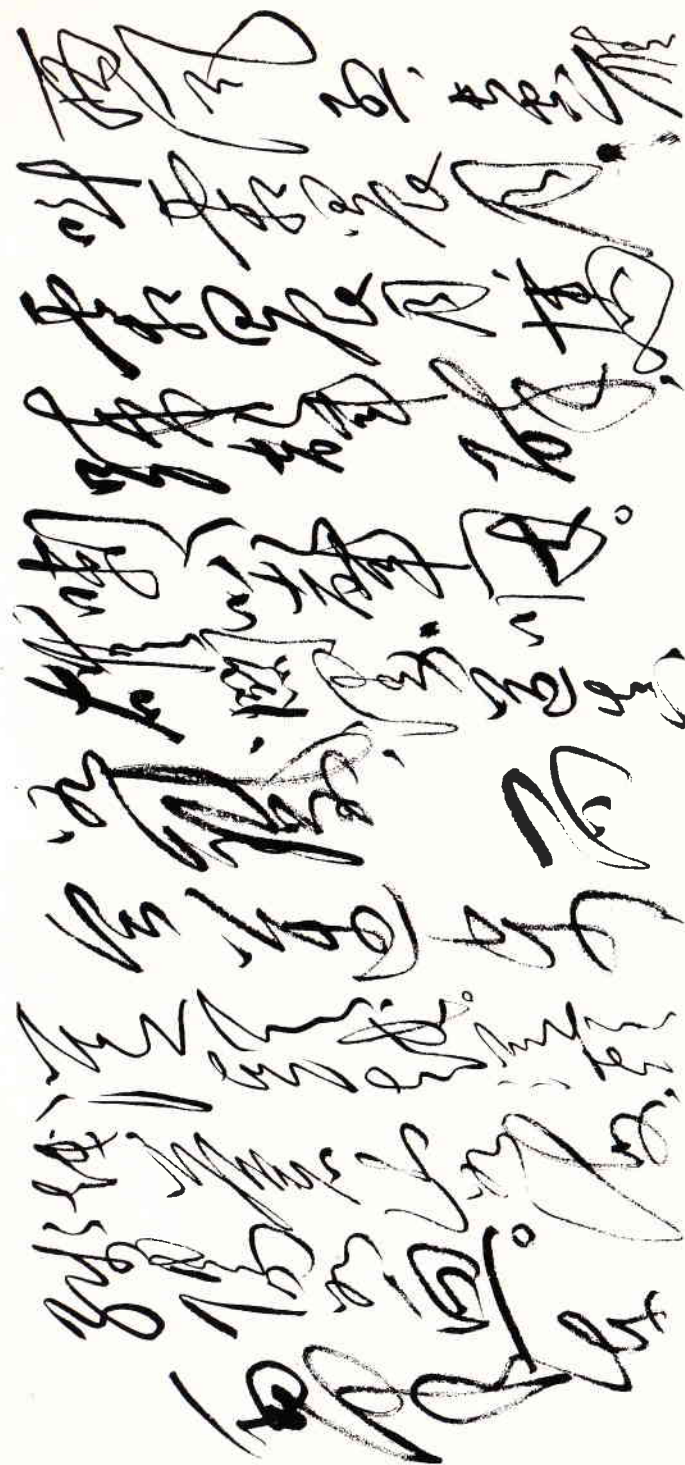
LOUSHAN PASS

—to the tune of *Yi Chin O*

February 1935

Fierce the west wind,
Wild geese cry under the frosty morning moon.
Under the frosty morning moon
Horses' hooves clattering,
Bugles sobbing low.

Idle boast the strong pass is a wall of iron,
With firm strides we are crossing its summit.
We are crossing its summit,
The rolling hills sea-blue,
The dying sun blood-red.



THREE SHORT POEMS

— to the tune of *Shih Liu Tzu Ling*

1934-1935

I

Mountains!
I whip my swift horse, glued to my saddle.
I turn my head startled,
The sky is three foot three above me!*

II

Mountains!
Like great waves surging in a crashing sea,
Like a thousand stallions
In full gallop in the heat of battle.

III

Mountains!
Piercing the blue of heaven, your barbs unblunted!
The skies would fall
But for your strength supporting.

*AUTHOR'S NOTE:

A folk song runs:

Skull Mountain up above,

Treasure Mountain down below,

The sky is only three foot three away.

Bend your head if you go by foot,

Dismount if you go by horse.

THE LONG MARCH

— a *lu shih*

October 1935

The Red Army fears not the trials of the Long March,
Holding light ten thousand crags and torrents.
The Five Ridges wind like gentle ripples
And the majestic Wumeng roll by, globules of clay.
Warm the steep cliffs lapped by the waters of Golden
 Sand,
Cold the iron chains spanning the Tatu River.
Joyously crossing Minshan under a thousand *li* of
 snow,
The three Armies march on, each face glowing.

KUNLUN

— to the tune of *Nien Nu Chiao*

October 1935

Far above the earth, into the blue,
You, wild Kunlun, have seen
All that was fairest in the world of men.
Your three million white jade dragons in flight*
Freeze the sky with piercing cold.
In summer days your melting torrents
Flood the streams and rivers,
Turning men into fish and turtles.
Who has passed judgement on the good and ill
You have wrought these thousand autumns?

To Kunlun now I say,
Neither all your height
Nor all your snow is needed.
Could I but draw my sword o'ertopping heaven,

I'd cleave you in three:
One piece for Europe,
One for America,
One to keep in the East.
Peace would then reign over the world,
The same warmth and cold throughout the globe.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:*

An ancient poet said: "While the three million white jade dragons were fighting, the air was filled with their tattered scales flying." Thus he described the flying snow. I have borrowed the image to describe the snow-covered mountains. In summer, when one climbs to the top of Minshan, one looks out on a host of mountains, all white, undulating as in a dance. Among the local people a legend was current to the effect that all these mountains were afire until the Monkey King borrowed a palm leaf fan and quenched the flames, so that the mountains turned white.

MOUNT LIUPAN

— to the tune of *Ching Ping Yueh*

October 1935

The sky is high, the clouds are pale,
We watch the wild geese vanish southward.
If we fail to reach the Great Wall we are not men,
We who have already measured twenty thousand *li*.

High on the crest of Mount Liupan
Red banners wave freely in the west wind.
Today we hold the long cord in our hands,
When shall we bind fast the Grey Dragon?

SNOW

— to the tune of *Chin Yuan Chun*

February 1936

North country scene:
A hundred leagues locked in ice,
A thousand leagues of whirling snow.
Both sides of the Great Wall
One single white immensity.
The Yellow River's swift current
Is stilled from end to end.
The mountains dance like silver snakes
And the highlands* charge like wax-hued elephants,
Vying with heaven in stature.
On a fine day, the land,
Clad in white, adorned in red,
Grows more enchanting.

This land so rich in beauty
Has made countless heroes bow in homage.

But alas! Chin Shih-huang and Han Wu-ti
Were lacking in literary grace,
And Tang Tai-tsung and Sung Tai-tsu
Had little poetry in their souls;
And Genghis Khan,
Proud Son of Heaven for a day,
Knew only shooting eagles, bow outstretched.
All are past and gone!
For truly great men
Look to this age alone.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:*

The highlands are those of Shensi and Shansi.

THE PLA CAPTURES NANKING

— a *lu shih*

April 1949

Over Chungshan swept a storm, headlong,
Our mighty army, a million strong, has crossed the
Great River.
The City, a tiger crouching, a dragon curling,
outshines its ancient glories;
In heroic triumph heaven and earth have been over-
turned.
With power and to spare we must pursue the tottering
foe
And not ape Hsiang Yu the conqueror seeking idle
fame.
Were Nature sentient, she too would pass from
youth to age,
But Man's world is mutable, seas become mulberry
fields.

REPLY TO MR. LIU YA-TZU

— a *lu shih*

April 29, 1949

I still remember our drinking tea in Kwangchow
And your asking for verses in Chungking as the
leaves yellowed.
Back in the old capital after thirty-one years,
At the season of falling flowers I read your polished
lines.
Beware of heartbreak with grievance overfull,
Range far your eye over long vistas.
Do not say the waters of Kunming Lake are too
shallow,
For watching fish they are better than Fuchun River.

LIU YA-TZU'S POEM

MY THOUGHTS PRESENTED TO CHAIRMAN MAO

— a *lu shih*

You excel as the maker of a new epoch!
Hard it was for me to laud Light in dark times.
Lecturing on classics, I am no time-serving scholar
And, to my sorrow, have met with no warm reception.
Remorse fills me at the thought of my misspent life,
Yet my heart will remain true to the end.
O for glad tidings from the southern expedition!
Lake Fenhu will then be my hermit resort.

REPLY TO MR. LIU YA-TZU

— to the tune of *Wan Hsi Sha*

October 1950

At a song and dance performance during the National Day celebrations of 1950, Mr. Liu Ya-tzu wrote an impromptu poem to the tune of *Wan Hsi Sha*, to which I replied, using the same rhyme sequence.

The night was long and dawn came slow to the
Crimson Land.

For a century demons and monsters whirled in a
wild dance,
And the five hundred million people were disunited.

Now the cock has crowed and all under heaven is
bright,
Here is music from all our peoples, from Yutien too,
And the poet is inspired as never before.

LIU YA-TZU'S POEM

— to the tune of *Wan Hsi Sha*

On October 3, I attended a soirée in Huai Jen Tang. Performances were given by ensembles from the various nationalities in the Southwest, Sinkiang, Yenpien in Kirin Province, and Inner Mongolia. At Chairman Mao's request, I composed the following poem to celebrate the great unity of the nationalities.

Displays of fiery trees and silver flowers, a night without
darkness.

Brothers and sisters skip by gracefully in dance.
The strains of *The Full Moon** rise with joyful swell.

But for one man's wise leadership,
How could the hundred nationalities assemble?
This merry eve's festive gathering surpasses all!

*Liu Ya-tzu's note:

There is a Kazakh folk song in Sinkiang called *The Full Moon*.

PEITAIHO

— to the tune of *Lang Tao Sha*

Summer 1954

A rainstorm sweeps down on this northern land,
White breakers leap to the sky.
No fishing boats off Chinwangtao
Are seen on the boundless ocean.
Where are they gone?

Nearly two thousand years ago
Wielding his whip, the Emperor Wu of Wei
Rode eastwards to Chiehshih; his poem survives.
Today the autumn wind still sighs,
But the world has changed!

SWIMMING

— to the tune of *Sbui Tiao Keb Tou*

June 1956

I have just drunk the waters of Changsha
And come to eat the fish of Wuchang.
Now I am swimming across the great Yangtse,
Looking afar to the open sky of Chu.
Let the wind blow and waves beat,
Better far than idly strolling in a courtyard.
Today I am at ease.
“It was by a stream that the Master said —
“Thus do things flow away!” ”

Masts sway gently in the wind.
Tortoise and Snake are still.
Great plans are afoot:
A bridge will fly to span the north and south,
Turning a deep chasm into a thoroughfare;

Walls of stone will stand upstream to the west
To hold back Wushan's clouds and rain
Till a smooth lake rises in the narrow gorges.
The mountain goddess if she is still there
Will marvel at a world so changed.

REPLY TO LI SHU-YI

— to the tune of *Tieb Lien Hua*

May 11, 1957

I lost my proud Poplar and you your Willow,
Poplar and Willow soar to the Ninth Heaven.
Wu Kang, asked what he can give,
Serves them a laurel brew.

The lonely moon goddess spreads her ample sleeves
To dance for these loyal souls in infinite space.
Earth suddenly reports the tiger subdued,
Tears of joy pour forth falling as mighty rain.

FAREWELL TO THE GOD OF PLAGUE

— two *lu shih* poems

July 1, 1958

When I read in the *Renmin Ribao* of June 30, 1958 that schistosomiasis had been wiped out in Yukiang County, thoughts thronged my mind and I could not sleep. In the warm morning breeze next day, as sunlight falls on my window, I look towards the distant southern sky and in my happiness pen the following lines.

I

So many green streams and blue hills, but to what
avail?
This tiny creature left even Hua To powerless!
Hundreds of villages choked with weeds, men wasted
away;

Thousands of homes deserted, ghosts chanted mourn-
fully.

Motionless, by earth I travel eighty thousand *li* a day,
Surveying the sky I see a myriad milky ways from
afar.

Should the Cowherd ask tidings of the God of Plague,
Say the same griefs flow down the stream of time.

II

The spring wind blows amid profuse willow wands,
Six hundred million in this land all equal Yao and
Shun.

Crimson rain swirls in waves under our will,
Green mountains turn to bridges at our wish.
Gleaming mattocks fall on the Five Ridges heaven-
high;
Mighty arms move to rock the earth round the Triple
River.

We ask the God of Plague: "Where are you bound?"
Paper barges aflame and candle-light illuminate the
sky.

SHAOSHAN REVISITED

— a *lu shih*

June 1959

I visited Shaoshan on June 25, 1959 after an absence of thirty-two years.

Like a dim dream recalled, I curse the long-fled
past —
My native soil two and thirty years gone by.
The red flag roused the serf, halberd in hand,
While the despot's black talons held his whip aloft.
Bitter sacrifice strengthens bold resolve
Which dares to make sun and moon shine in new skies.
Happy, I see wave upon wave of paddy and beans,
And all around heroes home-bound in the evening
mist.

ASCENT OF LUSHAN

— a *lu shih*

July 1, 1959

Perching as after flight, the mountain towers over
the Yangtse;
I have overleapt four hundred twists to its green crest.
Cold-eyed I survey the world beyond the seas;
A hot wind spatters raindrops on the sky-brooded
waters.
Clouds cluster over the nine streams, the yellow crane
floating,
And billows roll on to the eastern coast, white foam
flying.
Who knows whither Prefect Tao Yuan-ming is gone
Now that he can till fields in the Land of Peach
Blossoms?

MILITIA WOMEN

INSCRIPTION ON A PHOTOGRAPH

— a *chueh chu*

February 1961

How bright and brave they look, shouldering five-
foot rifles
On the parade ground lit up by the first gleams of
day.
China's daughters have high-aspiring minds,
They love their battle array, not silks and satins.

REPLY TO A FRIEND

— a *lu shih*

1961

White clouds are sailing above Mount Chiuyi;
Riding the wind, the Princesses descend the green
hills.
Once they speckled the bamboos with their profuse
tears,
Now they are robed in rose-red clouds.
Tungting Lake's snow-topped waves surge sky-
ward;
The long isle reverberates with earth-shaking song.
And I am lost in dreams, untrammelled dreams
Of the land of hibiscus glowing in the morning sun.

THE FAIRY CAVE

INSCRIPTION ON A PICTURE TAKEN
BY COMRADE LI CHIN

— a *chueh chu*

September 9, 1961

Amid the growing shades of dusk stand sturdy
pines,
Riotous clouds sweep past, swift and tranquil.
Nature has excelled herself in the Fairy Cave,
On perilous peaks dwells beauty in her infinite
variety.

REPLY TO COMRADE KUO MO-JO

— a *lu shih*

November 17, 1961

A thunderstorm burst over the earth,
So a devil rose from a heap of white bones.
The deluded monk was not beyond the light,
But the malignant demon must wreak havoc.
The Golden Monkey wrathfully swung his massive
cudgel
And the jade-like firmament was cleared of dust.
Today, a miasmal mist once more rising,
We hail Sun Wu-kung, the wonder-worker.

KUO MO-JO'S POEM

ON SEEING "THE MONKEY
SUBDUES THE DEMON"

— a *lu shih*

Confounding humans and demons, right and wrong,
The monk was kind to foes and vicious to friends.
Endlessly he intoned "The Incantation of the Golden Hoop",
And thrice he let the white-boned demon escape.
The monk deserved to be torn limb from limb;
Plucking a hair means nothing to the wonder-worker.
All praise is due to such timely teaching,
Even the Pig grew wiser than the fools.

ODE TO THE PLUM BLOSSOM

— to the tune of *Pu Suan Tzu*

December 1961

On reading Lu Yu's *Ode to the Plum Blossom*, I
countered it with the following lines.

Wind and rain escorted Spring's departure,
Flying snow welcomes Spring's return.
On the ice-clad rock rising high and sheer
A flower blooms sweet and fair.

Sweet and fair, she craves not Spring for herself
alone,
To be the harbinger of Spring she is content.
When the mountain flowers are in full bloom
She will smile mingling in their midst.

LU YU'S POEM

ODE TO THE PLUM BLOSSOM

— to the tune of *Pu Suan Tzu*

Outside the post-house, beside the broken bridge,
Alone, deserted, a flower blooms.
Saddened by her solitude in the falling dusk,
She is now assailed by wind and rain.

Let other flowers be envious!
She craves not Spring for herself alone.
Her petals may be ground in the mud,
But her fragrance will endure.

WINTER CLOUDS

— a *lu shih*

December 26, 1962

Winter clouds snow-laden, cotton fluffs flying,
None or few the unfallen flowers.
Chill waves sweep through steep skies,
Yet earth's gentle breath grows warm.
Only heroes can quell tigers and leopards
And wild bears never daunt the brave.
Plum blossoms welcome the whirling snow;
Small wonder flies freeze and perish.

REPLY TO COMRADE KUO MO-JO

— to the tune of *Man Chiang Hung*

January 9, 1963

On this tiny globe
A few flies dash themselves against the wall,
Humming without cease,
Sometimes shrilling,
Sometimes moaning.
Ants on the locust tree assume a great-nation
swagger
And mayflies lightly plot to topple the giant tree.
The west wind scatters leaves over Changan,
And the arrows are flying, twanging.

So many deeds cry out to be done,
And always urgently;
The world rolls on,

Time presses.
Ten thousand years are too long,
Seize the day, seize the hour!
The Four Seas are rising, clouds and waters raging,
The Five Continents are rocking, wind and thunder
roaring.
Our force is irresistible,
Away with all pests!

KUO MO-JO'S POEM

— to the tune of *Man Chiang Hung*

When the seas are in turmoil
Heroes are on their mettle.
Six hundred million people,
Strong in unity,
Firm in principle,
Can shore up the falling heavens
And create order out of the reign of chaos.
The world hears the cock crowing
And day breaks in the east.

The sun rises,
The icebergs melt.
Gold is not pinchbeck
And can stand the proof of flames.
Four great volumes
Show us the way.
How absurd for Chieh's dog to bark at Yao;
The clay oxen plunge into the sea and vanish.
The red flag of revolution is unfurling in the east wind,
The universe is glowing red.

REASCENDING CHINGKANGSHAN

— to the tune of *Shui Tiao Keb Ton*

May 1965

I have long aspired to reach for the clouds
And I again ascend Ching kangshan.
Coming from afar to view our old haunt,
I find new scenes replacing the old.
Everywhere orioles sing, swallows dart,
Streams babble
And the road mounts skyward.
Once Huangyangchieh is passed
No other perilous place calls for a glance.

Wind and thunder are stirring,
Flags and banners are flying
Wherever men live.
Thirty-eight years are fled

With a mere snap of the fingers.
We can clasp the moon in the Ninth Heaven
And seize turtles deep down in the Five Seas:
We'll return amid triumphant song and laughter.
Nothing is hard in this world
If you dare to scale the heights.

TWO BIRDS: A DIALOGUE

— to the tune of *Nien Nu Chiao*

Autumn 1965

The roc wings fanwise,
Soaring ninety thousand *li*
And rousing a raging cyclone.
The blue sky on his back, he looks down
To survey Man's world with its towns and cities.
Gunfire licks the heavens,
Shells pit the earth.
A sparrow in his bush is scared stiff.
"This is one hell of a mess!
O I want to flit and fly away."

"Where, may I ask?"
The sparrow replies,
"To a jewelled palace in elfland's hills.
Don't you know a triple pact was signed

Under the bright autumn moon two years ago?
There'll be plenty to eat,
Potatoes piping hot
With beef thrown in."
"Stop your windy nonsense!
Look, the world is being turned upside down."

QUOTATIONS FROM CHAIRMAN MAO

Not only must we have a powerful regular army, we must also organize contingents of the people's militia on a big scale. This will make it difficult for the imperialists to move a single inch in our country in the event of invasion.

Be ready to assemble at the first call and be capable of fighting and winning.

BOULDER BAY

(Script produced by the Shanghai Peking Opera Troupe in May 1975)
Written by Ah Chien

Characters

Lu Chang-hai	<i>Party secretary and militia leader of Boulder Bay Brigade</i>
Granny Tseng	<i>an old fisherwoman of Swallow-tail Island</i>
Hai-yun	<i>Woman platoon leader of the Boulder Bay militia</i>
Uncle Hsiang Wu	<i>an old fisherman</i>
Hai-ken	<i>Hai-yun's brother, a militiaman and head of the fishing team</i>
Chiao-lien	<i>Lu Chang-hai's wife and Granny Tseng's daughter</i>
Ah-tuan	<i>a Young Pioneer</i>

For more information about this opera see the article on p. 131.

First Platoon Leader of the militia
Second Platoon Leader
Fourth Platoon Leader
Militiawomen A and B
PLA messenger
Militiamen and women
Fisherfolk
PLA soldiers

Commander Hei *known as Black Shark, head of a commando unit of Chiang Kai-shek's "Anti-Communist National Salvation Army" and a local despot*

Ting Wen-chai *vice-commander of the commando unit*
08 *an enemy agent*

Chiu Erh-neng *an enemy posing as a fisherman*
09 *an enemy agent*

Commander of the second enemy detachment
Enemy agents

SCENE ONE

THE CONCH SOUNDS

Time: An afternoon late in September 1963.

Place: Boulder Bay, a fishing harbour in southeast China.

(As the curtain rises the bright autumn sun shines on a forest of masts and red flags fluttering in the breeze. In one corner of the jetty women are cheerfully weaving fishing nets while elated militiamen carry loads of fish to and fro.)

(The sound of singing approaches.)

Granny Tseng (*sings offstage*): *Our boats are filled with gold and silver fish.*

Chiao-lien (*sings offstage*): *The roaring tide proclaims a record year!*

Granny (*sings offstage*): *A forest of masts with red flags flying high.*

(*Enter Hai-ken and Uncle Hsiang Wu. The women stop work and straighten their clothes as they look out to sea.*)

Together (*sing*): *All hearts are glad for National Day is near!*
(*They wave.*) **Granny!**

(*Granny Tseng calls back offstage, then enters followed by Chiao-lien, a baby on her back and a basket in one hand. The others greet them with smiles.*)

Hai-ken: Ah, granny, we haven't seen you for a long time.
What wind has blown you to Boulder Bay?

Granny: The day after tomorrow is National Day; I've come to buy some gold thread to embroider a red flag.

Chiao-lien: And my baby's one year old; I want to buy some flowered print to make her a jacket.

Hai-ken: What else?

Chiao-lien: What else?

Hai-ken (*mischievously*): Brother Chang-hai's been away two months at sea,
Sister Chiao-lien's worn out her eyes watching for him;
She's come today to fetch him back to the island,
To enjoy the festival with a happy reunion!

(*Chiao-lien smilingly raises a hand to slap Hai-ken who dodges quickly.*)

(*The women pull Chiao-lien over to chat.*)

(*Chiu Erh-neng slips in to inspect the nets and eavesdrop.*)

Granny (*to Uncle Hsiang Wu*): Uncle Hsiang Wu,
The fishing boats are all back in the bay,
Why haven't we seen Chang-hai yet?

Uncle: We sighted the enemy out at sea,
He's gone to defence headquarters to discuss preparations for battle.

Granny: Ah!

(*Gongs and drums can be heard in the distance.*)

Chiao-lien: Mother, look!
Lanterns, bunting, gonging and drumming.

Hai-ken (*to Chiao-lien*): They're rehearsing songs and dances,
You'd better join in the show.

(The women approve and carry off Granny and her daughter. Hai-ken is about to leave too.)

Chiu *(coming down from the dyke)*: Hey, Brother Hai-ken,

Have more enemy movements been spotted out at sea?

Hai-ken *(casually)*: Yes, we saw a suspicious-looking fishing-boat.

Chiu: A fishing-boat?

Hai-ken: They said they were fishing but they didn't cast their nets, just drifted this way and that. They may have been spying.

Chiu *(aside)*: Clouds are gathering; a storm's about to break.

(To Hai-ken) Looks as if Old Chiang is really planning a raid!

Hai-ken: Bah, an egg knocking against a rock. . . .

Chiu: That's right, he wouldn't dare. *(Turns to leave.)*

Hai-ken: By the way, Chiu Erh-neng,

About those nylon fishing-nets you ordered,

I think we should pay for them early;

You never know what may happen;

Better clinch the deal right away.

Chiu: I'm on good terms with the people in the store,

(Slaps his chest.) They won't let me down.

Wait till they phone us to fetch them;

That won't be too late.

Hai-ken: Then I'll go and draw the money first.

Chiu: All right. *(Takes a slip of paper from his pocket and gives it to Hai-ken.)* Here's the invoice. *(They smile at each other then leave separately.)*

(A conch is blown.)

(Militiamen and women from different walks of life race in from all sides and run off.)

(Lu Chang-bai, a conch in one hand, springs on to the dyke and strikes a pose.)

Lu *(sings)*: *The sound of the conch reverberates in the bay, (Comes down.)*

Headquarters has ordered an emergency muster;

Though black clouds low and billows pound the shore,

Our troops and civilians will defend the coast with fists of iron!

(He blows the conch.)

(As the conch sounds, Hai-yun and the first, second and fourth platoon leaders dash in followed by all the armed militiamen and women to form four rows on each side. The members of the second platoon are in gay costumes.)

First Platoon Leader: First Platoon present!

Lu *(approvingly)*: Good! Weapons of every kind
All gleaming bright.

(The First Platoon raise their arms and strike a pose.)

Second Platoon Leader: Second Platoon present!

Lu: Why all these gaudy costumes and bright ribbons?

Second Platoon Leader: We were just rehearsing. . . .

Militiamen *(together with smiles)*: . . . a dance. *(They strike a pose.)*

Lu: Fine. Third Platoon.

Hai-yun *(anxiously)*: Report, Third Platoon is one short.

Lu: Who's missing?

Hai-yun *(anxiously)*: My brother Hai-ken.

(Hai-ken calls offstage, "Coming!" and runs in with his rifle.)

Hai-ken *(sweating and panting)*: Here!

Hai-yun *(reproachfully)*: The conch call is the army order;
What made you so late?

Hai-ken *(defensively)*: Signing a cheque, putting on the office stamp;
I'd important business
No one else could have done.

Hai-yun: You. . . .

Lu: Hai-ken!

As a militiaman you should know

Our first rule is to assemble as soon as summoned.

(Hai-ken lowers his head and says nothing.)

Lu: Fourth Platoon.

Fourth Platoon Leader: Report! Our platoon has one extra.

Lu: Who's that?

Granny: Present! *(Steps forward proudly holding a fishing trident.)*

Lu: Mother!

Fourth Platoon Leader: Granny, you're old,
 And your home is on Swallow-tail Island. . . .

Granny (*with spirit*): A tiger even when old remains high-mettled,
 An old woman can have high resolve.
 Wherever the conch sounds the call
 Is my fighting post!

Lu (*grasping her hand with emotion*): Mother!

All: Granny!

Lu (*turning to the militia*): Comrades!
 (*Granny takes her place in the ranks.*)
 We spotted a suspicious boat out at sea;
 Headquarters, too, has received intelligence
 That over National Day the U.S.-Chiang pirates
 Mean to raid our coast and make trouble.
 (*All show indignation.*)
 Our orders from defence headquarters are:
 From Horse-shoe Bay in the north
 To Swallow-tail Island in the south
 All men and women, old and young, must mobilize
 To send out more patrols and post more sentries.
 No matter where the enemy strikes, from land or sea or air. . . .

All (*wrathfully*): We'll send them to the bottom of the sea!

Lu: Fine. Now quickly carry out our plan of action
 And keep a lookout for the red lantern signal.

All: Very good.

(*At a sweep of Lu Chang-bai's hand, the ranks of militiamen run off, their rifles over their shoulders.*)
 (*The sun is setting, reddening the clouds.*)
 (*Some fishermen cross the stage carrying crates of fish.*)
 (*Lu goes out, then returns with others carrying a load of fish.*)
 (*Chiao-lien calls offstage, "Mother!" She enters, her baby in her arms, and looks around.*)

Chiao-lien: Mother! . . . Where can she have gone?

Lu (*puts down his load and pats Chiao-lien on the shoulder*): What are you doing here?

Chiao-lien (*turning round and pouting*): Get away with you! (*Hands him her towel to wipe his sweaty face.*) Let's go. (*Gives the baby to him.*)
 Hoist sail and row quickly home
 For a cup of wine first, then some tea. (*She has started off, but her husband makes no move.*)

Chiao-lien (*turning round*): Well? Why aren't you coming?

Lu (*apologetically*): Chiao-lien,
 I want to ask you for leave.

Chiao-lien (*puzzled*): Ask me for leave?

Lu: Over National Day the enemy may make trouble,
 So how can I leave the harbour and go home? (*Holds the baby out to her.*)

Chiao-lien (*not taking the child*): Before you put out to sea you promised me
 To be home for baby's first birthday.
 It's a special occasion —
 How can you go back on your word? (*In a huff she plumps down on a crate of fish.*)

Lu (*teasing the baby*): Go back first, Baby Lien-fang, with mum;
 Next time dad won't go back on his word. (*He holds the baby out again, but Chiao-lien still refuses to take it.*)

Lu (*jokingly*): Oho, mum doesn't want you!
 Come along with dad then to the sentry post. (*Starts off.*)

Chiao-lien (*springing to her feet*): Stop! (*Taking the baby*) Don't go with him.
 (*Lu Chang-bai laughs.*)

Chiao-lien (*still more provoked*): Even a bird has the sense to go back to its nest,
 But to some people home means nothing.

Lu (*with feeling*): A wild goose flying a thousand *li* away
 Still longs for its reedy marshes;
 What fisherman on the high seas
 Doesn't dream of his dear ones?

Chiao-lien (*brightening up*): Does he?

Lu: Of course. (*Thinks back.*)

A year ago, I remember, you yourself told me
That on her first birthday you'd take up your rifle again.

Chiao-lien: A child not yet weaned can't be parted from its mother;
What time have I to carry a rifle again?

Lu: Chiao-lien,
Monsters and savage beasts are out for men's blood;
We must be on our guard.

Chiao-lien: Swallow-tail Island's surrounded by hidden reefs,
Boulder Bay is well garrisoned.
We patrol every day,
Stand sentry every night;
Who has ever seen a monster
Or savage beast?

Lu (*annoyed*): The poisonous snake has already shown its fangs,
The shark is preparing to strike.

Chiao-lien (*exasperated*): Even if the enemy come,
They may not choose today.

Lu: We must drill our troops every day,
And watch out for marauders every night.

Chiao-lien: Before you came back everything was calm;
Now you're back there's a raging storm!

Lu (*angry and distressed*): I remember how active you used to be on
the drill ground,
How keen you were and how fearless in those days;
But now you've crept into your shell
And are sound asleep.

Chiao-lien (*indignantly*): You. . . . (*A glance from her husband silences
her. She stamps her foot.*) Ai! (*Turns away and sits down.*)

(*It is gradually growing darker.*)

Lu (*puts his wife's towel back round her neck and says quietly but with feeling*):
Chiao-lien! (*Sings.*)
Can't you look further than your little home
To see the tempest raging out at sea?

*In spring we must guard against sudden frost,
A garden of flowers may hide vipers.
We must always remember to be vigilant;
How can a babe in your arms make you lay down your gun?*

Chiao-lien (*springing up resentfully*): All right, I'll carry my child,
You carry your gun;
I'll creep into my shell,
You stand sentry;
We'll neither of us interfere with the other,
(*Sobbing with rage*) And have nothing more to do with each other!
(*Stamps her foot and turns, then goes quickly off with her basket.*)

Lu: You

(*Chiao-lien abruptly turns back to thrust a jacket at her husband, then
walks away again.*)

Lu: Chiao-lien! (*Runs after her.*) Chiao-lien!

(*His wife ignores him, wiping her tears as she leaves.*)

Lu (*waving and calling*): Chiao-lien!

(*Enter Granny Tseng and Hai-yun.*)

Granny: Chang-hai, where's Chiao-lien?

Lu: She's gone off in a towering rage.

Granny (*sighs*): It's all my fault for spoiling her as a child,
Making her so self-willed.
Let her go. I'll stay here;
I may be able to help out a bit.

Lu: No, we need people to keep an eye on Swallow-tail Island too;
And you may be able to make Chiao-lien see reason.

(*Offstage, Uncle Hsiang Wu calls, "Chang-bai!" He enters holding
something wrapped in a cloth, followed by Hai-ken.*)

(*Enter the first and second platoon leaders with Militiamen A and B
from the other side.*)

(*Uncle Hsiang Wu looks around.*)

(*Lu signs to the militiamen to stand sentry.*)

Uncle Hsiang Wu (*quietly*): Just now when I passed the bridge
at the end of the village,
I heard someone knocking on a tree.
(*All exclaim in surprise.*)
When I went over to look the man had gone;
I found the lime plastered over a hole chipped off;
I pulled off the rest of the lime and felt inside. . . . (*Gives the package
to Lu Chang-hai.*)

Hai-ken: What's in this wrapper?

(*Lu unwraps the cloth, revealing a sheath.*)

Granny: A sheath!

All: A sheath?

Lu (*thoughtfully*): Comrades,
Why an empty sheath? Where's the dagger?
Why should it have been taken out now of all times?

Hai-yun: Who can have hidden it?

Lu: We must think this over carefully.

Granny (*takes the sheath and examines it*): Within a hundred *li* of
Boulder Bay,

Who but that runaway despot Black Shark
Could own something as fine as this?

Lu: Right. (*Takes the sheath.*) There must be wind to whip up
waves,

Must be a storm to lash trees.

Uncle (*examining the cloth gives a start*): Why, look! (*Putting one
foot on the crate he spreads out the cloth.*)

Lu (*surprised*): A white handkerchief
With a cuttle-fish embroidered on it,
And two holes in it.

(*To Uncle Hsiang Wu*) What is this?

Uncle: The pirates used to wear masks like this.

(*All are staggered.*)

Granny (*recalling the past*): Talk of those pirates fills my heart with
hatred.



Lu Chang-hai, Party secretary and militia leader

Photographs from "BOULDER BAY"



Lu tries to straighten out his wife Chiao-lien's thinking

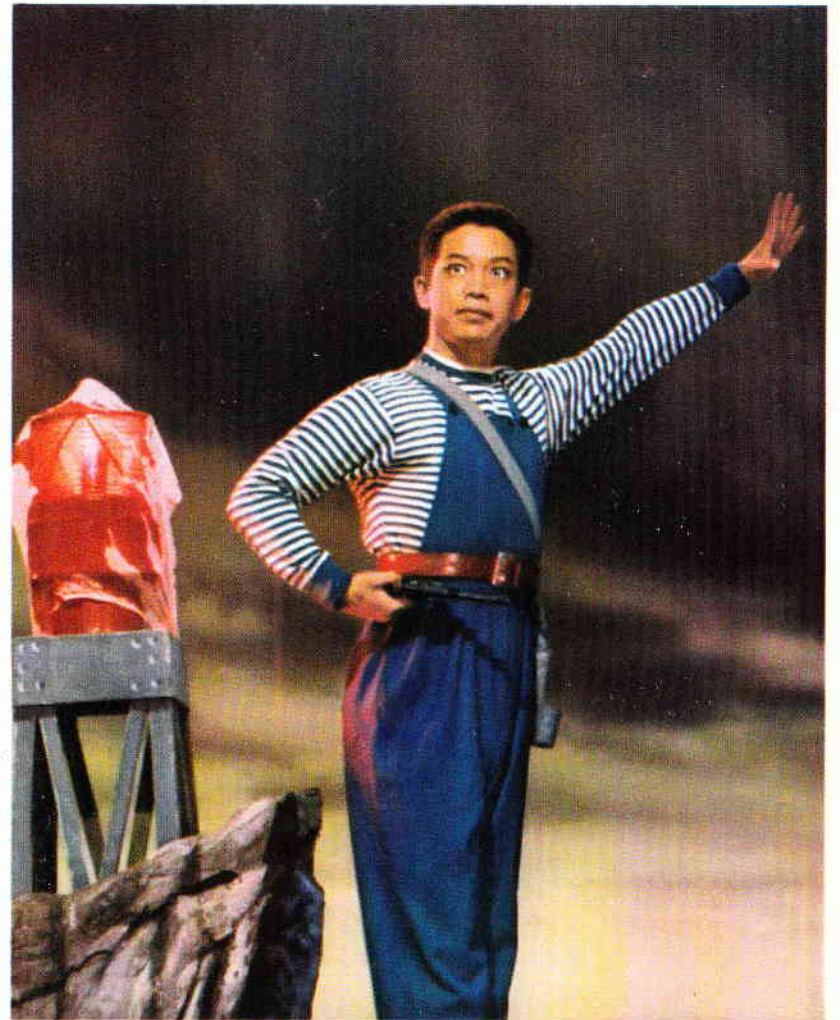
Lu tricks the enemy agent into disclosing their plan



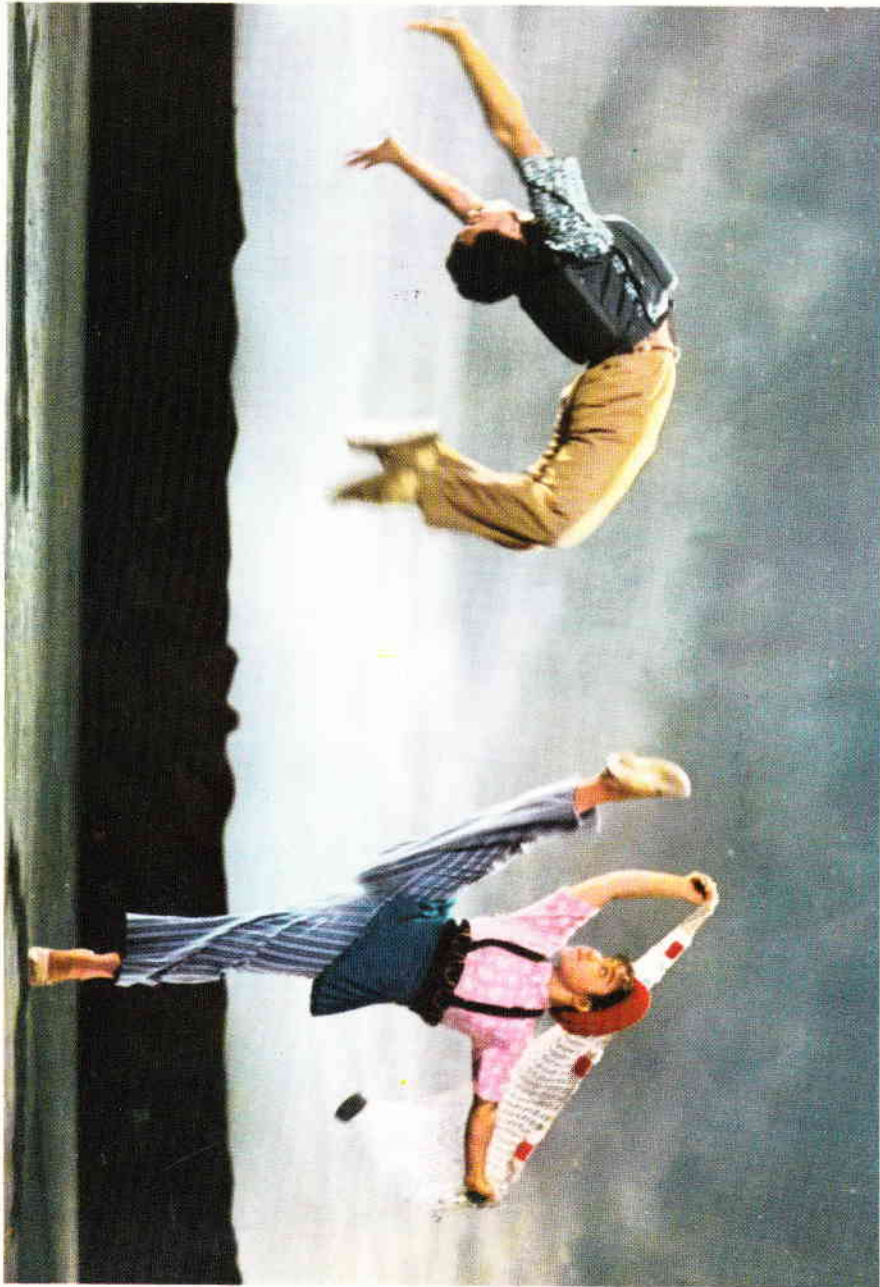


Lu recalls the past to educate Hai-ken, head of the fishing team

Granny Tseng tells Ah-tuan a story about the signal tree



Lu signals for help by covering the lantern with his blood-stained towel



Uncle (*vehemently*): The sight of this white mask conjures up the past.

Granny: Remember how that foul despot dunned us for taxes.

Uncle: We poor fisherfolk lived worse than beasts of burden.

Granny (*to Hai-yun*): Your dad and Chang-hai's dad

Led the villagers to resist paying taxes and levies;

They were thorns in Black Shark's flesh, bones in his gullet,

So, in secret, the devil did away with them.

(All exclaim in horror.)

Uncle: That day,

We hoisted sail to put out to sea

And had just left Boulder Bay

When a wind sprang up, storm clouds gathered,

And a pirate vessel swept through the angry waves.

Its prow was packed with thugs,

All brandishing swords and yelling,

White masks on their faces,

Only their two eyes showing.

On the masks were embroidered emblems:

Fish, turtles, lobsters and crabs

In yellow, red, purple or blue.

On the mask of the pirate chief was a cuttle-fish. *(He shakes out the cloth.)*

(Lu Chang-hai takes it and examines it.)

All (*startled*): A cuttle-fish!

Uncle: Those pirates steered clear of the other boats,

Making straight for the fishing-boat manned by your fathers;

Leaping on board like famished wolves

They fell on them savagely, whirling and slashing their swords.

Your fathers stood up to them as bold as lions,

Snatching up fishing-tridents they fought back;

But those devils outnumbering them pushed them into the sea. . . .

(Darts up the dyke, followed by the others. With distress)

Their blood dyed the billows red.

(Hai-ken and Hai-yun bound up the dyke to gaze out to sea. Hai-yun turns, lays her head on her brother's shoulder and weeps. The waves roar as all descend with heavy hearts.)

Hai-ken *(running down, to Uncle Hsiang Wu)*: Where's that Cuttle-fish now?

Uncle: He disappeared without a trace. *(Sings.)*

*We thought this had gone like a pebble dropped in the sea,
Little thinking to find this evidence of their crime.
This sheath wrapped in a mask is highly suspicious. . . .*

(All think hard.)

Lu *(sings)*: *This business must be connected with Black Shark,
The sheath wouldn't be taken out of hiding for nothing.
(Thinks.) The Cuttle-fish must be lurking in our bay.
(He continues to examine the sheath and suddenly discovers something.)*
Look, there's writing on the sheath!

Uncle *(takes it over and reads)*: Dagger leaves sheath;
Sheath leaves dagger;
As to old friends,
Tally can be given.

All: What does that mean?

*(Cudgelling his brains, Lu walks up the dyke.)
(Uncle Hsiang Wu repeats these lines under his breath. The others are lost in thought too.)*

Lu *(suddenly)*: I've got it! *(Turns and comes down the dyke.)*
This is a cipher which makes no sense read straight through.
Just read the first word of each line and you'll get the meaning.

Granny: The first word?

Lu: Yes. *(Reads.)* "Dagger leaves sheath."

All: Dagger!

Lu: "Sheath leaves dagger."

All: Sheath!

Lu: "As to old friends."

All: As!

Lu: "Tally can be given."

All: Dagger and sheath as tally!

Lu *(incisively)*: This means that the enemy outside want co-operation from their agent here,

Using dagger and sheath as the tally to make contact.

(To First Platoon Leader) Report this immediately to joint defence headquarters.

First Platoon Leader: Right.

Lu *(to Second Platoon Leader)*: Watch out for enemy movements and report them at once to militia headquarters.

Second Platoon Leader: Right.

Lu *(to Hai-yun)*: Send someone to the security office
To track down Cuttle-fish and get to the bottom of this case.

Hai-yun *(taking the mask)*: Right.

Lu: Mother. . . .

Granny: You must stay here, Chang-hai. I'll go back to the island
To prepare for battle and reason with Chiao-lien. *(Sings.)*
Each one of us on each island must be prepared for battle.

Lu *(sings)*: *Small streams converge to make the mighty ocean.*

All *(sing)*: *All of us are sentries patrolling our motherland's coast.*

Lu: And every family is a sentry post.

All *(sing)*: *A wall of steel*

(The choir offstage joins in) Guards our vast motherland!

(Lu Chang-hai leaps on to the crate with the others in line behind him to strike a pose.)

(The lanterns for the festival light up, making a riot of colour.)

(Curtain)

SCENE TWO

A BLACK WHIRLWIND SPRINGS UP

Time: Dusk.

Place: Mid-ocean. An enemy vessel camouflaged as a fishing-boat is tossing in the storm.

(As the curtain rises, dark clouds gather, the sea roars and the wind rages. The lantern on the mast sheds a dim light. In the cabin, Black Shark, commander of the enemy commando unit, and Vice-commander Ting Wen-chai are studying a chart. The radio operator is transmitting and receiving radiograms.)

(Enter Agent 09.)

09: Report, commander,
We're approaching coastal waters.

Black Shark: Lights out and bear straight on
To Boulder Bay.

09: Yes, sir. (*Exit.*)

Black Shark (*looking at the night sea, gloats*): Ah, Boulder Bay,
Boulder Bay! (*Sings.*)
*Your thousands of acres of fine land,
Your forests of sails and masts,
After I succeed in landing tonight
Will all be in my hands again!*
(*He chortles.*)

(*The lantern on the mast is extinguished. The waves surge.*)

Ting wen-chai (*anxiously*): Ai!
Landing, climbing the cliff,
Establishing a foothold, expanding our force,
Then co-ordinating in the counter-offensive —
This mission is no joke.

Black Shark (*disapprovingly*): What?

Radio Operator: A wire from Taiwan.

Black Shark: Read it.

Radio Operator (*reading the telegram*): Special instructions:
Commanders Hei and Ting,
You are corner-stones of our state,
Pillars of our society.
Tonight, landing on the mainland,
You must show daring and determination;
If you fail, yours will be a glorious death.

Ting (*gasps*): If we fail, ours will be a glorious death?

Black Shark (*glares at Ting and announces loudly*): Transmit this answer:
We shall prove our loyalty to our Kuomintang Party and state,
And remain steadfast to the end!

Radio Operator: Yes, sir. (*Sits down to transmit this message.*)

Black Shark (*beckoning*): 08!

(*Enter Agent 08.*)

08: Commander!

Black Shark: The mainland is in sight.

08: I am waiting for the order to go into action.

Black Shark: Have I treated you well?

08: With the utmost kindness, sir.

Black Shark: The saying goes: We train troops for a thousand
days. . . .

08: To use in an emergency.

Black Shark: To lay down his life for our Kuomintang and the
state. . . .

08: Is the duty of a soldier.

Black Shark (*pleased*): Well said! I'm promoting you to the rank
of major to lead this action.

08: I am overwhelmed by your goodness to me, sir.

(*The boat rocks in the leaping waves. Black Shark and 08 stagger
against each other.*)

Black Shark: Your task tonight. . . .

08: Is to swim ashore under water.

Black Shark: Make contact with our agent. . . .

08: Find out the dispositions of the defence.

Black Shark: When this is done. . . .

08: Send out the signal.

Black Shark: Then co-ordinate your movements. . . .

08: To facilitate your landing with our force.

Black Shark: Your liaison place?

08: An old tile-roofed house.

Black Shark: What landmark?

o8: A gingko tree near by.
Black Shark: Your contact?
o8: The boat-repairer Chiu Erh-neng.
Black Shark: Good. (*Produces a dagger.*)
This dagger and its sheath are the tally;
The sheath fits it like a glove.
To win victory tonight
We need this as the key-link. (*Hands over the dagger.*)
o8 (*taking the dagger*): Yes, sir. (*Turns to leave.*)

(*The sea roars.*)
Ting: Wait! (*To Black Shark*) Commander,
Potatoes rot over winter;
More than ten years have passed, this fellow Chiu. . . .
Black Shark: Bah, what watchdog forgets its master?
For years he worked for me in my fishery
And in piracy out at sea.
I left this "Cuttle-fish" there
To provide us with an accomplice on shore today.
Radio Operator: What brilliant foresight, commander!
Black Shark (*to o8*): Go quickly.
o8: Yes, sir. (*Prepares to leave with the dagger.*)
Ting: Wait. (*To o8*) Don't offer incense until you've seen the true
Buddha.
o8: No, sir. Mum's the word until I've seen the sheath.
Black Shark (*waves him off impatiently*): Get going!
o8: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. (*Starts off.*)
Ting (*loudly*): Wait!

(*o8 stops again.*)
(*Black Shark and the radio operator scowl at them.*)
Ting (*going over to o8*): Lu Chang-hai, the head of Boulder Bay's
militia,
Once served in the Reds' army.
He's tough and wily,
You must watch out for him.

Black Shark (*losing patience*): Bah!
A beggarly fisherman,
What can he do?
(*To o8*) Get into your diving dress
And look sharp!
o8: Yes, sir. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter o9.*)
o9: Report: we're now in coastal waters.
Ting: Be doubly careful.
Black Shark (*to o9*): Fetch the commander of the Second Detachment.
o9 (*calling*): Second Detachment Commander!

(*The Second Detachment's commander staggers in as the boat rocks.*)
Second Detachment Commander: Commander.
Black Shark: The mainland's in sight.
I shall take the First Detachment in by dinghy;
Wolf Fang Reef is right ahead.
Wait with your men out at sea for the order to join us.
Second Detachment Commander: Yes, sir.

(*o8 enters in a diving outfit.*)
o8: I'm ready, sir, for your orders.
Black Shark: I wish you success.
o8: I shall carry out my mission.
Black Shark: Get started!
o8: Yes, sir.

(*o8 pulls down his diving-goggles and plunges into the water.*)
(*The waves surge.*)
(*The men on board stagger as the boat pitches and tosses.*)

(Curtain)

SCENE THREE

THE DAGGER IS FITTED TO THE SHEATH

Time: The same night.

Place: Chiu Erh-neng's house and its surroundings.

(The curtain rises on a misty night with dim moonlight. The autumn wind is sighing and waves break intermittently on the rocks. The old tile-roofed house is cluttered with a chest, cupboard, table, bench, stools and tools for repairing boats.)

(Chiu Erh-neng, one foot on a round stool, looks tense as he drinks alone.)

Chiu (*tossing off a cup and putting it down*): What a narrow shave!
When I went for the sheath this evening
I very nearly got caught.
If I'm found out
I'll be sunk. (*Hearing a noise outside, he peers out of the window.*)

(*Hai-ken, a rifle on his back and an oar over his shoulder, passes the window and enters.*)

Chiu (*struck by an idea, steps out to welcome him*): Ah, Brother Hai-ken!

Have you got the cash for buying the nets?

Hai-ken: I've got a cheque. I've seen to everything. (*Passes Chiu the cheque.*)

Chiu: Why, how did you get so wet?

Hai-ken: I was inspecting our kelp and the waves wet my clothes.

Chiu: Come in quick and have a drink. (*Takes the oar from Hai-ken and puts it by the door.*)

Then you won't catch cold.

(*Hai-ken wants to decline but Chiu pulls him in. Hai-ken unslings his rifle. Chiu takes it and puts it by the table. Hai-ken sits down and starts wringing out his clothes.*)

Chiu (*pours a drink while angling for information*): This evening you cadres had a meeting.

Was it about production?

Hai-ken (*off-handedly*): No,
We discovered the sheath of a dagger
And were discussing it.

Chiu: Oh?
Any clues to follow up?

Hai-ken: There was a white cloth
Wrapped round the sheath,
And on it is embroidered a cuttle-fish.

Chiu (*starts*): Ah?

Hai-ken (*turning to look at him*): What?

Chiu (*hastily passes him a towel and tries to cover up*): Well, that's certainly odd.

Hai-ken: It seems Cuttle-fish was a pirate;
Before Liberation, in league with the fishing despot,
He murdered countless people out at sea.
When we capture him
We'll make him pay for his crimes. (*Pounds the table with his fist.*)

Chiu (*turns pale, then takes a grip on himself and passes over the cup*): Quite right, he should pay for his crimes. (*Takes back the towel to mop his sweaty face.*)

Hai-ken: To track down this Cuttle-fish
We've already sent people to the security bureau.

Chiu (*in dismay, aside*): Confound it!
When those men of our gang in prison see this white cloth,
They'll come clean and I'll be exposed.
What can I do? (*Thinks hard.*)

There's only one chance for me. . . . (*Blurts out.*) I must hurry off.

Hai-ken (*surprised*): Hurry off? Where to?

Chiu: Well . . . you see. . . .
(*Improvises.*) The store just telephoned to say

Those nets must be fetched at once.

Hai-ken (*jumps up*): Fetched at once?

Chiu: If we go too late, others may take them.

Hai-ken (*picks up his rifle to go, then stops*): But I'm on sentry duty after midnight.

Chiu: If we go by boat you'll be back in time.

Hai-ken: All right. (*Reflects.*) No, that won't do.
No boats can go out tonight
Without permission from militia headquarters. (*He puts down the rifle and sits down again.*)

Chiu (*whispers*): If we miss this chance, the work will suffer.
This is the best season for fishing;
What a pity to pass up a really fine catch.

Hai-ken (*hesitating*): Still . . . we can't break the rules.

Chiu: You're the head of the fishing team, aren't you?
Surely you have that much authority?
If you're working for the welfare of the collective
No one will hold it against you.

Hai-ken (*making up his mind*): All right, let's find a boat.

Chiu: Fine. (*Hastily opens the door, then turns to make a thumbs-up sign to Hai-ken.*) This shows you're whole-heartedly for the collective!

(*Chiu scuttles out carrying the oar and, passing the window, leaves. Hai-ken puts out the light and follows, closing the door behind him and leaving his rifle by the table.*)
(*o8 enters furtively, disguised as a fisherman with a fish-crate on his back. He peers around.*)

o8: Across a stone bridge
A small path
Leads to a ginkgo tree.
(*Pleased*) Right,
This is the house. (*Looks around and goes to the door, meaning to knock, but then listens carefully and turns to peep through the window. His shadow flits past the window and disappears.*)

(*Enter Lu Chang-hai with Hai-yun and Militiaman A in pursuit.*)

Lu (*sings*): *We let the dog crawl ashore then followed him,
He must have some reason for going straight to Chiu's house.
We'll hide in the dark to watch what the devil's up to.
(Lu and the others hide behind some trees.)*

(*o8 returns, peers around and taps at the door. After a pause he knocks again, then opens the door. It creaks, making him start nervously.*)
(*Lu whispers to Hai-yun then slips away through the darkness.*)

o8 (*backs away and closes the door, looking around*): It's late and everything's quiet, so why is there nobody here? (*Hears a movement and takes cover.*)

(*Lu Chang-hai strides in.*)

Lu (*sings*): *I bait my hook and cast my line, ready to seize my chance!
(Walks to the door, opens it and enters. Closes the door, turns on the light and looks around. Surprised by the sight of Hai-ken's rifle, he hastily hides it.)*

(*o8 quietly comes out of hiding.*)

o8 (*sings*): *This fellow striding so carelessly into the house
Must be Chiu Erb-neng himself.*

(*Lu opens the chest to have a look inside, then closes it again and shuts the window.*)

Lu (*sings*): *A good fisherman can make fish rise to the bait;
A good hunter can decoy birds to the wood.*

(*The two men tiptoe to the door and listen, one on each side.*)

o8 (*outside the door, raises his hand to knock but thinks better of it. Sings*):
Before knocking I must make sure this is not a trap.

Lu (*inside, thinking hard. Sings*): *To get the better of him, I must fox him.*

o8 (*sings*): *A chameleon can take on protective colouring.*

Lu (*sings*): *A tiger-hunter knows how to outwit a tiger!*

(*o8 knocks at the door.*)

Lu: Who's there?
o8: A fisherman.
Lu: A fisherman should go down to the beach,
 What brings you to the village?
o8: I've come to ask for some water,
 My throat is parched.
Lu: Oh, come on in then, come in.
o8: Sorry to trouble you! (*Enters, takes off his straw hat and puts down the fish-crate.*)
(Lu closes the door and goes to fetch a teapot and bowls from a shelf.)
o8 (*eyes Lu surreptitiously and grows suspicious. Aside*): Chiu Erh-neng is over forty,
 But this fellow looks much younger.
(Lu brings the pot and bowls to the table.)
o8: Do you live on your own here?
Lu (*deliberately evading the question*): Here ... there's water in the pot. Help yourself. (*Picks up some tools and sits down.*)
o8: How long have you lived here?
Lu: Drink up and then go on your way. (*Keeps on working.*)
o8: If you don't mind, there's something I'd like to ask you.
Lu (*not even looking up*): If you've business, come early tomorrow;
 It's too late now.
o8 (*roughly*): You don't look to me like the master of this house!
Lu (*springing to his feet*): A stranger, you come here on a trumped-up pretext,
 Then fire off all these questions — what's the idea?
o8 (*boldly*): You break into someone's house at night;
 If I investigate, I'm only doing my job.
Lu: Investigate? Who are you? (*Bangs his tool down on the table.*)
(o8 arrogantly takes out an identity card and tosses it on the table.)
Lu (*looks at it and pretends to be taken in*): So you're a security officer?
 My mistake! I beg your pardon.
 What brings you here?

o8 (*haughtily*): I wouldn't have come without a reason.
Lu: Just now I was too impolite,
 Please don't take offence.
o8: Who are you anyway?
Lu: Me? (*Sings.*)
I'm a friend of the boat-repairman who owns this house.
o8: What are you doing here so late?
Lu (*sings*): *I've some fishing tackle which must be repaired tonight.*
o8: But the master of the house is out.
Lu (*sings*): *We're old friends, so I come and go as I please.*
o8: Where is he?
Lu: What do you want him for?
o8 (*sings*): *Chiu Erh-neng is involved in a case.*
Lu (*puts on a show of dismay. Sings*): *If you ask in all the villages around*
Everyone will vouch for his good character.
o8: Who can know a man's heart
 From outward appearances?
Lu (*sings*): *What evidence have you of his guilt?*
o8 (*sings*): *That's a secret, you mustn't ask.*
(He pounds the table.)
Lu: Very well. (*Sings.*)
If you're on official business, I won't stay.
 Goodbye! (*Walks quickly away.*)
o8: Wait a minute!
(Lu Chang-hai comes slowly back. The two men walk round the table eyeing each other, each trying to find out what the other is thinking. Lu pretends to be worried and sighs.)
o8 (*sings*): *He acts like a good friend of old Chiu,*
A man on our side.
Lu (*sings*): *Even if he tries a thousand tricks, they won't work;*
I must hook this fish and land him!
(Still putting on an act) It's late now,
 I must go home to sleep.
o8: No, you must show me the way, please,
 To find him quickly.

Lu: On such a dark night
How can we possibly find him?
o8: This is urgent official business;
Stop making excuses.
Lu: For official business find the men in charge;
Why keep pestering me?
o8 (sternly): The security organs
Have serious tasks and high authority.
If I order you to act as guide and find him,
You must carry out my orders.
Lu: It's late and I'm tired. Won't it wait till tomorrow morning?
o8: No, this business is too urgent to wait.
Come on! (*Turns to the door.*)
Lu (suddenly pounds the table): Stop!
(*o8 halts.*)
Lu (with a show of sternness): There's a curfew throughout the vil-
lage;
Everywhere sentries are posted.
(*Hai-yun and two militiamen dart in and listen outside the door.*)
Lu: If you cause trouble at a time like this,
Are you willing to take the responsibility?
(*o8 slumps down on a stool in consternation.*)
(*Hai-yun knocks at the door. o8 panics at the sound and pulls out his gun.*)
Lu (quietly to o8): Keep calm.
(*Loudly*) Who's there?
Hai-yun: The militia.
Lu (answering): Coming. (*Opens the chest and signs to o8 to hide in it.*)
(*o8 hesitates. Hai-yun knocks again.*)
Lu: Coming, coming. (*Again signals to o8 to hide.*)
(*The agent dithers. Hai-yun knocks again. o8 loses his head.*)

Hai-yun (urgently): Open up! Quick!
(*o8 scrambles into the chest.*)
Lu (opening the door): Patrolling, eh, platoon leader?
Come on in.
Hai-yun (entering, seriously): Why are you still up so late?
Lu: I'm doing a rush job for the team.
Hai-yun: Has anybody been here?
Lu: I haven't seen a soul. (*Indicates the chest.*)
Hai-yun: Heard anything?
Lu: Only a few dogs barking and some cocks crowing.
Hai-yun: Whereabouts?
Lu: It sounded like east of the village.
Hai-yun: Come on, comrades! Let's have a look there.
Militiamen A and B: Right.
(*Lu Chang-bai and Hai-yun exchange meaningful glances and go outside.*)
Hai-yun (in a low voice): We've tracked down Cuttle-fish.
Lu (softly): Who is he?
Hai-yun: Chiu Erh-neng!
Lu (indignantly): That snake in the grass!
(*Decisively*) Arrest him. At once!
(*Hai-yun nods and leaves with Militiamen A and B.*)
(*Lu re-enters the room and closes the door, pretending to be listening to their receding footsteps.*)
(*o8 comes out and approaches Lu Chang-bai.*)
Lu (bars the door and whirls round with a show of anger): Dammit!
Such an important task yet you bungle it.
Do you want to save your skin or don't you?
o8 (flustered): What?
Lu: Bringing credentials like those —
Ridiculous!
o8: What credentials?
Lu: Those papers were out of date long ago,
But you thought you held a trump card.

If you'd shown them to a militiaman
He'd have seen through you at once.

(o8 takes out his identity card, looking puzzled.)

Lu (*grabs the card*): You fool!

Charging around like an idiot,

Too stupid to tell true from false,

Yet posing as a security officer,

Clumsy oaf! (*Tosses the card on the ground.*)

o8 (*slowly picks up the card in a daze*): Who are you?

You keep chopping and changing.

Lu (*significantly*): Why ask?

To cross a river you need a ferryman.

o8 (*surprised and overjoyed*): In that case

Won't you fetch old Chiu here quickly?

Lu: You can give me your message.

I have full authority to represent him.

o8 (*suddenly changes his tune and laughs craftily*): A fine act you've put
on,

Hoping I'd fall for it!

Lu: Don't you know,

Unless you bring incense you can't worship Buddha?

o8 (*craftily*): So that's what you have in mind. (*Produces a wad of
U.S. bank-notes.*)

(*Lu Chang-hai shakes his head.*)

o8: Too little? (*Takes out some gold bars.*) Here's gold.

Lu: That's not what I want. (*Turns abruptly away.*)

o8: So you don't want U.S. dollars or gold bars.

Lu: All I want is something money won't buy.

o8 (*pretending not to understand*): Something money won't buy?

Lu: The monk returns to his old temple and this returns to its
original case.

o8 (*still pretending not to understand*): Don't talk gibberish.

Lu (*laughs scornfully*): Why act so dumb?

o8 (*savagely*): I'll kill you!

Lu (*giving him tit for tat*): I'll put paid to you!

o8 (*suddenly produces the dagger*): Here! (*He lunges out with the dagger
and Lu pulls out the sheath to ward off the blow. At sight of the
sheath o8's face lights up.*)

o8 (*recites*): "Dagger leaves sheath."

Lu: "Sheath leaves dagger."

o8: "As to old friends."

Lu: "Tally can be given."

(*They step up to each other, fitting the dagger into the sheath.*)

o8: The dagger —

Lu: Returns to its sheath.

o8: The monk —

Lu: To his old temple.

o8: You bided your time well.

Lu: And you came at the right time.

o8: Fine!

Lu: Good!

(*They laugh heartily.*)

Lu (*suddenly stops laughing*): All's quiet at dead of night,
We mustn't make so much noise.

o8 (*nods. In a low voice*): Friend, you're really smart. (*Raises one
thumb.*)

Lu: I don't release the falcon till I've seen the hare.

o8: Right. The Reds are too quick in the uptake.

Lu: All the more reason for us to be on our guard.

o8: I hear there's a fellow called Lu Chang-hai
Who's abler and smarter than the Monkey King.

Lu (*chuckles*): What, him?

He's just an ordinary fisherman

Plying through wind and waves.

o8 (*reassured*): Well, where is old Chiu?

Lu: He's gone out on important business.

o8: When will he be back?

Lu: He won't get back to the village tonight.

o8 (*worried*): But our mission is urgent. I can't wait.

Lu: To tell you the truth,

He asked me to keep watch here;

If something important came up

I was to act for him.

o8 (*looks anxiously at his watch, then at the sheath. After a moment's thought he makes up his mind*): All right then. Listen.

Tonight our Kuomintang troops will be landing,

We must go to meet them at once,

To show them the way to avoid the sentry posts,

Then thrust swiftly into the mountains!

Lu: Who's in command?

o8: Commander Hei.

Lu (*startled*): Commander Hei?

o8: He used to lord it over Boulder Bay,

His name is known far and wide.

Lu (*catching o8 by the arm*): You mean Black Shark?

o8: Do you know him?

Lu (*suppressing his rage, laughs and answers equivocally*): Yes, indeed,

we had dealings for years,

We can count as old friends,

I've long been waiting for his return.

Ten years and more I've been watching out for him.

o8 (*relieved*): Ah.

Lu: What time are they landing?

o8: Four hours sharp.

Lu: How large a force?

o8: Thirty men.

Lu: The landing place?

o8: East of the beach.

Lu: How to make contact?

o8 (*producing an apparatus*): We'll signal at three

To report that we've made contact.

Lu (*taking the apparatus*): Good.

I'll see to it. (*Puts the thing in his pocket. Sings.*)

Well met at Boulder Bay with dagger and sheath as tally!

My thanks for intelligence brought across the seas.

The enemy are such fools, they are still dreaming.

(o8 *nods and smiles complacently.*)

Lu: Open the door.

o8: Right. (*Opens the door.*)

(*Militiamen rush in, their guns trained on o8.*)

Militiamen: Hands up!

(o8 *tries frantically to draw his pistol.*)

Lu (*snatches his gun and throws him to the ground*): Don't move!

o8: You are. . . .

Lu: An ordinary fisherman.

o8 (*suddenly understanding*): Lu Chang-hai! (*Hangs his head.*)

Lu (*laughs jubilantly. Sings*): *We fishermen roaming the seas*

Catch all savage sharks and rogue whales!

Militiamen: Come on! (*They strike a militant pose.*)

(*Curtain*)

SCENE FOUR

THE PARTY COMMITTEE MEETING

Time: Midnight.

Place: Militia headquarters.

(As the curtain rises the night is still; moonlight gleams on the eaves of the building. Out at sea can be seen a forest of sails and flickering signal lanterns. In the courtyard grows a gnarled old banyan tree.) (A militiaman carrying a rifle stands sentry. Lu Chang-hai sits by the table deep in thought.)

Lu (*sings*): *Above the horizon the stars move in their course, the moon sinks westward;*

Before battle I keep in view many contingencies.

(*Hai-yun and Uncle Hsiang Wu hurry in.*)

Hai-yun (*panting and mopping her face*): We've searched everywhere inside and outside the village.

Uncle: But found no trace of Chiu Erh-neng or Hai-ken.

(*They all look at the gun left by Hai-ken.*)

Lu (*thoughtfully*): Why have the two of them disappeared, now of all times?

Come, let's hold a Party meeting to think out the reason.

Uncle: Good.

(*The three of them walk up to the table.*)

Uncle: Hai-ken's leaving his rifle here --- that's a bad business.

Hai-yun: We must give him a good talking-to when we find him!

Lu: But first we must get clear on what has happened.

Hai-yun (*sighs*): It's enough to make anyone frantic! (*Puts the rifle by the stone steps.*)

(*Enter Hai-ken.*)

Hai-ken (*seeing the rifle, excitedly*): Ah, my rifle! (*Seizes it.*)

Hai-yun (*pleased*): Brother!

Lu and Uncle: Hai-ken!

Hai-ken (*clasps his rifle with a sigh of relief*): Thank goodness! (*Sits down.*)

Lu (*pouring water for him*): Where have you been so late?
You had us all worried.

Hai-ken: I'd just time to make a trip to the county town.

Lu: To the county town? Have you seen Chiu Erh-neng?

Hai-ken (*casually*): Yes, we went together to buy nets.

Lu (*quickly*): Where is he now?

Hai-ken: He's gone to the ship-chandler's to buy rope.

Lu: And you. . . .

Hai-ken: I was worried about my rifle
And afraid I might be late for sentry duty;
Since he'd taken the boat
I had to come back on foot.

Lu (*startled*): Where did he get a boat?

Hai-ken (*smiling sheepishly*): That was my doing. I let him have one without first asking permission.

(*All exclaim.*)

Hai-ken (*hastily justifying himself*): Still. . . .

We've managed to buy nylon nets,

(*Gleefully*) Three of them!

So our trip wasn't for nothing.

Lu (*swiftly*): Young Ma, send a patrol boat out at once.

We must catch Chiu Erh-neng at all costs.

A Militiaman: Right. (*Runs off.*)

Hai-ken (*puzzled*): What's up?

Uncle: So you're still all at sea.

Chiu is an out-and-out scoundrel.

(*Hai-ken exclaims in surprise.*)

Lu: Didn't he ask you for any information?

Hai-yun: Did you tell him any secrets?

Hai-ken (*huffily*): What do you mean?

What secrets could I tell him?

Hai-yun: All that time you were with him

Did nothing suspicious strike you?

Hai-ken: A man's character isn't written on his face:

How could I tell he's a wrong 'un?

Uncle: He used to run errands for Black Shark:

Don't tell me you didn't know that?

Hai-ken (*taking a high moral tone*): Well, a fellow can change his ways, can't he?

It isn't right to keep raking up old accounts.

The last two years he's turned over a new leaf,

He's really keen on his work.

Look at the pains he took to get those nets tonight.

Without him the business wouldn't have gone through so smoothly.

Hai-yun (*angrily*): So you're still singing his praises,
Talking rubbish!

Hai-ken (*challengingly*): If you're so clever,
Try buying a net yourself!

Uncle (*in distress*): Flies don't swarm around an egg unless it's
cracked;

Water doesn't drip from a kettle unless it leaks.
You're so thick with him, so lacking in vigilance,
You even leave your rifle in his house.

(*Hai-ken gives an exclamation of dismay.*)

Hai-yun: You . . . you . . .

You're late for muster, leave your weapons about,
And can't tell friend from foe, thinking Chiu your brother;
You break the rules and commandeer a boat,
Why . . .
What sort of militiaman do you call yourself?

(*Hai-ken turns away indignantly. Hai-yun angrily grabs his rifle.*)

Hai-ken (*startled*): You . . . (*Tugs at the rifle.*)

Hai-yun: You're not fit to carry arms for the revolution! (*She
shoves Hai-ken away and hands the rifle to Lu.*)

Hai-ken (*furiously*): Company leader, she . . .

Lu (*takes the gun in silence, then says earnestly*): If a gun has no sights,

You won't hit your target;
If you lower your guard,
You won't see through the enemy's tricks.
You've fallen into the fellow's trap,
Hai-ken,

And already worked for a traitor.

Hai-ken (*shocked*): Worked for a traitor?

You mean you suspect me too?
(*Resentfully*) I've worked with all my might
For production, for the collective,
Roughing it, straining every nerve,
Sweating in the sun,

All over mud in the rain,
Thinking of nothing but increasing production,
With never a thought for myself.
I don't mind if I get no credit,
But a dressing-down like this is too much! (*Stamps his foot in
a rage, then rounds abruptly on Lu Chang-hai.*)
Why jump to such wild conclusions,
Grilling me and making ridiculous accusations?
As kids we went begging together,
But you've turned against me now, forgetting the past.
(*Bitterly*) Yes, you've forgotten,
Completely . . . (*sobbing*) forgotten the past.

(*Hai-yun steps forward to speak.*)

Hai-ken (*pushes her aside. To Lu*): All right then,
You're the head of the militia, you have the power
To investigate me, dismiss me, have me locked up —
Anything you like! (*Turns to leave.*)

(*Lu angrily pounds the table. Hai-ken is startled and stops.*)
(*A long silence.*)

Lu (*making an effort to control his feelings, says gravely*): Have I forgotten
the past?

Forgotten all we went through?
(*With emotion*) Who is it . . . who's forgotten?
At sight of this banyan tree, the eaves of this house,
The past rises before my eyes. (*Sings.*)
*How can we poor brothers forget our common sufferings,
Growing up together from the same bitter root?
How can we forget the days when we begged hand in hand
And huddled together below these eaves, hungry and cold?
A single sweet potato we shared between us,
And half a ladleful of leftover rice.*

(*Grips Hai-ken's hands.*)

*Can we forget how our fathers were murdered together out at sea
While we watched from the shore for their sail, for their boat to return!*

(They all gaze into the distance, overcome with grief.)

(Hai-ken wipes his eyes. Uncle Hsiang Wu and Hai-yun turn away to sob.)

Lu (sings): We cried ourselves hoarse,
Wept until our tears ran dry,
Appealing together to the mighty ocean,
Calling together upon the boundless sky!
To take revenge, we rushed to the fishing depot,
We were bound with one hempen rope (leading Hai-ken to the banyan)
to the same tree.
The whip lashed down, faying us both;
The butcher's knife made blood spurt from both our arms,
(He and Hai-ken display the scars on their arms.)
From gashes equally wide, equally deep!

(Uncle Hsiang Wu sits down; Hai-yun leans on his shoulders and sobs bitterly.)

Lu (sings): To think that these scars remain but your heart has changed;
Intent on casting your net, you ignore the hidden reefs that may wreck your
boat!

Gradually losing your class vigilance
You take wine with arsenic for honey-dew;
Forgetting that wild beasts never change their nature,
You lie down with wolves and tigers.

I too have failed in my duty by not giving you enough help;
The thought of this pierces my heart and fills me with shame.

Hai-ken (sings): Do you mean that Chiu Erh-neng is a wolf in sheep's
clothing?

Hai-yun (sings): He's Cuttle-fish, the murderous pirate.

Hai-ken (sings): You say he's Cuttle-fish, but who can prove it?

Hai-yun (sings): The captured pirates have confessed; that's incontroverti-
ble proof.

Hai-ken (sings): Was he the one, then, who went to get out the sheath?

Uncle (sings): Yes, he'd kept it hidden there ten years and more.

Hai-ken (sings): Why hide the sheath then fetch it out again?

Hai-yun and **Uncle** (sing): To contact the enemy who are going to make
a secret raid on our bay.

Hai-ken (sings): What evidence have you for this?

Lu: Look! (Draws the dagger.)

Hai-ken (shocked): A dagger! Whose is it?

Lu: Black Shark's.

Hai-ken: Ah!

Lu (sings): He sent a liaison man but their plot was discovered,
Chiu here was to have helped them....

Lu, Uncle and **Hai-yun** (sing): Stage a come-back.

Lu (sings): They planned to make a surprise landing....

Lu, Uncle and **Hai-yun** (sing): This very day!

Lu (sings): Army and civilians we're ready to wipe them out.

Hai-ken (suddenly): Dammit! Brother Chang-hai,
I'm a stupid fool;

I deserve to be cashiered. (Squats down and punches his head.)

All: What do you mean?

Hai-ken (remorsefully): Now I see I did let out some secrets.

Lu: What did you tell him?

Hai-ken (standing up): Just before leaving he asked me....

Lu (urgently): What?

Hai-ken: Our militiamen's reaction to finding the sheath.

Lu: What did you say?

Hai-ken: We'd sent to investigate.

Lu: Investigate what?

Hai-ken: Who'd hidden the sheath, using the Cuttle-fish mask to
identify him.

Lu (dismayed): Chiu Erh-neng must have run away then.

All: Run away?

Lu: Taking the boat out to sea.

All: Out to sea? (They gaze through the darkness at the roaring sea.)

Uncle: Judging by the tide and the direction of the wind
He may come across the enemy landing force.

Lu: If he finds them

They'll know that their contact's fallen through,
And they won't attempt to land here.

All (*anxious*): What shall we do?

Lu (*after reflecting*): It's nearly dawn, they won't dare to stay long at anchor;

They'll have to change course and head east.

Uncle: In that case, aren't they bound to pass Swallow-tail Island?

Hai-yun: Swallow-tail Island?

Lu: Judging by the situation, it's very likely.

Hai-yun: There are so many small islands dotted about there,

It may be hard to spot the enemy.

Uncle: Each of those islands has a signal tree

When it's down we'll know something's wrong.

Lu: Right.

(*A PLA messenger offstage calls "Company Leader Lu!" then enters.*)

Messenger: Report!

Lu: Young Kao!

Messenger: An urgent communication from headquarters. (*Delivers a dispatch.*)

(*Lu reads it while the messenger shakes hands with Hai-yun and the others.*)

Lu (*having read the dispatch*): Hai-yun, sound the call to assemble.

We're going full speed to Swallow-tail Island!

Hai-yun: Right.

(*The messenger leaves. The conch sounds. Militiamen run in with rifles and quickly form ranks.*)

Hai-yun: Report!

All the militia are present.

Lu: Comrades,

The enemy have changed course;

They may be passing Swallow-tail Island.

Our orders from Joint Defence Headquarters are:

Co-operate with the regulars to pursue and wipe them out!

Hai-yun: Even if they fly to the ends of the earth

We'll catch them in our net.

All: They won't escape, not even if they grow wings!

Lu: Let's go!

(*The east is growing light.*)

(*The militiamen race off.*)

(*Hai-ken rolls up his sleeves, ready to follow.*)

Lu: Hai-ken!

(*Hai-ken halts. Lu holds out his rifle. Hai-ken, deeply stirred, rushes over and clasps his gun to his heart. Lu grips his shoulder and smiles.*)

(*Dawn breaks. Very moved, they stand side by side gazing at the horizon, striking a pose.*)

(*Slow Curtain*)

SCENE FIVE

THE DOGS FALL IN THE WATER

Time: Dawn.

Place: The shore of Swallow-tail Island.

(*As the curtain rises, waves pound the rugged rocks. Chiu Erh-neng emerges through the thick mist from behind a rock and peers around, then turns and beckons. Black Shark, Ting Wen-chai, the radio operator and other enemy agents appear. Exhausted, they stagger forward a few steps, then collapse on the ground.*)

Black Shark (*takes off his diving suit and tosses it to Chiu. Dejectedly*):

To hell with it!

We set out to be tigers but end up as dogs,

Our dinghy wrecked on a reef.

Ting (*sits on a rock. Resentfully*): Dammit!

It's all owing to our lack of forethought

That we've ended up in this fix on Swallow-tail Island.

Black Shark (*pugnaciously*): o8 let us down,

Spoiling our plan.

We're close to Turtle Hill here;
Where else could we have gone if not to this island?

(Ting stands up to argue back.)

Radio Operator: Gentlemen,
It will soon be light and the mist is scattering;
Better plan our next step without more delay.

Chiu: Quite right.
If we arouse the islanders here
And they send out a signal, we shall be sunk!

Radio Operator *(in dismay)*: What signal?

Chiu: By day they give the alarm by pulling down the signal tree,
At night they use red lanterns.

(The enemy are taken aback.)

Chiu *(pointing at the distance)*: Hornets' Nest Cave in that cliff there
is a good size;

We may as well hide there till nightfall.

Black Shark: No, it's too risky staying here.

Chiu *(worried)*: Do you mean to move on in broad daylight?

Black Shark: We can't stay here till dark, that's for sure.

Chiu: But your dinghy's been wrecked on the reef.

Black Shark *(reflects then turns to Chiu)*: We must find a way to get
hold of a fishing-boat.

Radio Operator: And pass ourselves off as fishermen?

Black Shark: Yes. We'll go in disguise to Turtle Hill.

Radio Operator: Heaven help us!

Where can we get a boat?

Black Shark *(pulls out his pistol)*: Ha!

With this it will be easy.

Chiu: Take one by force?

Black Shark: Sure. Didn't you tell me no one lives on this island
Except a few women and children?

Chiu *(nods)*: Yes, that's true. . . .

Black Shark *(snapping out an order)*: Come with me then,
We'll seize a boat. *(Turns to leave, followed by the others.)*

Ting: Wait a moment.

(Black Shark and the others halt and turn to look at him.)

Ting: We mustn't act rashly again,
But work out a careful plan.
There may not be many people on this island
Yet it's close to others where they keep a strict lookout.
We mustn't use force,
To use force would be disastrous!

Black Shark: What's your idea then?

Ting *(confidently)*: Get a boat not by force but by a trick!

All *(thoughtfully)*: A trick?

(The spotlight focuses on Ting.)

(Curtain)

SCENE SIX

SWALLOW-TAIL ISLAND

Time: The same morning.

Place: In front of Granny Tseng's house on Swallow-tail Island.
*(The curtain rises to reveal a blue sea, green hills and an azure sky
flecked with fleecy white clouds. Phoenix-trees are in bloom; banana
trees sway in the breeze. Over the door hang a red flag and red lan-
terns, giving the place a festive atmosphere. By the stone steps are
stools, hassocks, a cradle and a fishing-net. On one side stands a
bamboo creel full of newly caught fish.)*

*(Granny Tseng uses a trident to hang another red lantern over the
door. Some men and women cross the stage carrying fishing tackle
and their night's catch.)*

Fisherfolk: Granny!

Granny: Ah! *(Turns.)*

Fisherfolk: You're up early.

Granny (*greeting them warmly*): So after coming back at dawn
You haven't forgotten to hide the boats and oars.
A Fisherman: Aren't you always telling us to be on our guard
And, above all, to keep our treasures safe?

(They troop off laughing.)

Granny (*chuckles and sings*): Red flags flutter in the east wind,
The morning sun shines on our fishing harbour;
Every cottage here is a sentry post,
Every islander is armed.
With Chairman Mao to chart our course,
We fisherfolk, net in one hand, rifle in the other, vow to defend our coast!

(Enter Chiao-lien from behind the house, carrying her baby.)
(Offstage Ah-tuan calls "Aunt Chiao-lien!" He runs in towards her carrying a red-tasselled spear.)

Chiao-lien (*stops*): Hullo.

Ah-tuan: When will you be going to Boulder Bay again, aunty?

Chiao-lien: What do you want? (*Lays the baby in the cradle.*)

Ah-tuan: We want to ask Uncle Chang-hai

To come and teach us how to fire guns and throw hand-grenades.

Chiao-lien (*crossly*): I shan't be going there again. (*Sits on a rock to weave a net.*)

(Ah-tuan is nonplussed.)

Granny (*reprovingly*): Always so self-willed you are,
So deaf to advice.

Ah-tuan (*softly*): What's the matter with her, granny?

Granny: Never mind her, Ah-tuan.

Won't it soon be your turn to keep watch by the signal tree?

Ah-tuan: That's right.

Granny: You must have all your wits about you.

Ah-tuan (*naively*): I'll keep my eyes wide open
And watch carefully the whole time.

Granny: And if you spot something suspicious?

Ah-tuan: I'll tug the tree like this (*he gestures*) that same second.

Granny (*stroking his head*): Good for you,
Young Pioneer! (*Laughs.*)

Ah-tuan (*eagerly*): Granny, you promised to tell me a story about
the signal tree;

I've been waiting all this time to hear it.

Granny (*with a glance at Chiao-lien*): All right, Ah-tuan, I'll tell you
the story.

Ah-tuan (*gleefully*): Good. (*Helps Granny to sit beside him on the steps.*)

Granny (*reminiscently*): It happened a long time ago. . . . (*Sings.*)

The cruel Japanese invaders
One day suddenly surrounded Boulder Bay.
We had no way to let our guerrillas know,
No one to pull down the signal tree; we frantically watched the south hill.
Then all of a sudden we heard a shout,
(Stands up.)
A brave boy less than ten years old stepped out from the crowd.
The quick-witted bold little fellow
Took a crate and sickle as if to cut grass for his sheep.
(Goes through the motions of cutting grass.)

Ah-tuan (*imitating her*): Took a crate and sickle?

Granny (*sings*): *Calm and cool, he sauntered along*
Past the sentries and the blockade,
Then flew like an eaglet straight to the south hill
And pulled down the signal tree to alert our guerrillas;
Like troops from the sky they descended on Boulder Bay;
The enemy, scared out of their wits, were routed;
And all of us poor fisherfolk laughed for joy.
We crowded round that little hero to praise him.

Ah-tuan (*admiringly*): Who was he, granny?

(Chiao-lien, who has been smiling, opens her mouth to answer.)

Granny: Your Uncle Chang-hai! (*Sings.*)
He was a brave member of the Children's Corps.

Ah-tuan (*resolutely*): Uncle Chang-hai is really brave.
I'm going to learn from his example
And be a good Young Pioneer.

Granny (*casting a glance at Chiao-lien*): Right,
We should all learn from his example.
We mustn't, because life today is sweet, forget past bitterness;
We mustn't, when flowers bloom, forget sharp winter winds.

Chiao-lien (*pouting*): That's quite enough.
You've been on at me ever since last night;
Are you never going to stop? (*Turns her head away.*)

(*A voice offstage calls "Ah-tuan!"*)

Ah-tuan: Coming. (*Starts to leave.*)

Granny (*fondly*): Ah-tuan,
We've fine fresh croaker and pomfret,
Come and have dinner here after your sentry duty.

Ah-tuan: Thanks, I will! (*Runs off.*)

(*Granny is just about to pick up the creel when the baby starts crying.*)

Chiao-lien (*meaningly*): What are you crying for? You're just like
your mum,

So self-willed and deaf to advice.

Granny (*comes over to pacify the baby. To Chiao-lien*): You're such
a blockhead,

I shall have to keep on at you for another three years!

Chiao-lien: Even three hundred years would be no good.

Just look,

The sea's so calm and blue,

Yet he insists that a storm's brewing;

There's a balmy breeze and warm sun,

Yet he predicts thunder and lightning.

Granny (*seriously*): When a boat springs a leak,

If not repaired it will sink;

When we have the wrong way of thinking,

If a monster appears we'll fail to recognize it.

Chiao-lien (*perversely*): All right, I'll keep my eyes open today

And watch for some monster to land. (*Sits down sulkily.*)

Granny: What are we to do with you?

You won't change course until you've smashed your prow,

Won't furl sail till your mast's blown down. (*Picks up the creel
and walks behind the cottage.*)

(*The baby starts crying again. Chiao-lien bends over it to soothe it.*)
(*Ting and the radio operator, dressed as cadres, approach through the
banana trees and flowers. Ting, catching sight of Chiao-lien, makes a
sign to the radio operator.*)

Radio Operator (*steps forward*): Sister-in-law.

Chiao-lien (*picking up the baby*): Who are you?

Radio Operator (*indicating Ting*): This is Director Ting from the
provincial capital.

Chiao-lien: Welcome, welcome.

(*Ting pretends to be dizzy and staggers. The radio operator hastily
supports him.*)

Ting: We ran into a storm last night, sister-in-law.

Our boat ran aground on a reef and sprang a leak.

Chiao-lien (*sympathetically*): So you ran aground — too bad!

Radio Operator: Yes. Can we borrow a fishing-boat or sampan
from you?

Chiao-lien (*readily*): Why, certainly.

Ting (*overjoyed*): Fine. Here's our letter of introduction.

Chiao-lien: I don't need to see that. You are our own people.

(*Turns and calls.*) Mother! (*Goes to the back of the cottage.*)

Radio Operator: Let's hope our luck holds and everything goes
smoothly.

Ting: Women are soft-hearted, easy to fool.

Radio Operator (*seeing something*): Ah, here they come.

Ting (*stopping him*): Quiet!

(*Enter Granny and Chiao-lien. Granny puts down the creel and wipes
her hands on her apron.*)

Granny (*cordially*): Well, director,
I hear you've run into trouble?

Ting (*all smiles*): Yes,
We hope you'll help us, granny,
So that we can get back in good time.

Granny: Come on, Chiao-lien, let's go and mend their boat
So as not to hold up their business. (*Prepares to leave.*)

Radio Operator (*hastily stopping her*): No need, no need!

(*Ting gives the radio operator a warning glance, which Granny notices.*)

Ting: You're so public-spirited, granny, so kind-hearted,
We're immensely grateful to you;
But our boat's so badly damaged
It'll take a long time to repair.
We'd better borrow a fishing-boat from you
So as not to cause too much delay.

Granny (*thoughtfully*): I see. . . .

Chiao-lien (*eagerly*): Mother, I'll go and fetch the oars,
Then we can row them off.

Granny (*quietly but meaningfully*): The tide is still at low ebb;
Even if we had a boat we couldn't launch it.

Ting: But. . . .

Granny: Chiao-lien, our visitors haven't slept all night.
Quickly go and brew some fresh tea.

Chiao-lien: Right. (*Goes into the house.*)

Ting (*wanting to stop her*): No need. . . .

Granny (*interposes, pointing at the hassocks on the steps*): Take a seat.

(*Ting and the radio operator have no choice but to sit down.*)

Granny (*casually picking up a spindle to twist yarn*): It'll soon be National
Day,

You must have important business to come here in person?

Ting (*improvising*): With a view to developing our fishing industry,
I've come to investigate these fishing grounds.

Granny (*testing him*): Do tell me, director,
What kinds of fish you've discovered hereabouts.

Ting: Ahem. . . . (*Glances at the creel.*) Oh, a lot: Croakers,
pomfrets, sharks. . . .

(*Chiao-lien brings in tea on a tray.*)

Radio Operator (*trying to help out*): Big shoals of eels too.

Granny: What? Eels?

Radio Operator: The sea's just packed with them.

Chiao-lien (*bursts out laughing*): My!

In the ninth month yellow croakers glint like gold;

In the tenth month hair-tail fish glimmer like silver.

At this time of year where could you see shoals of eels? (*Laughing she picks up her sewing-basket and sits down to sew.*)

Radio Operator: Oh! (*Tries to cover up his mistake.*) I didn't mean
eels,

I meant . . . shoals of hair-tail fish.

Ting (*hastily intervening*): After tossing about all night he's so ex-
hausted,

His wits are wandering.

Granny (*looks at Chiao-lien significantly*): We mustn't be too careless
or let our wits wander

So that we confuse eels with hair-tails. (*She laughs.*)

(*Ting laughs awkwardly.*)

(*Chiao-lien is still in the dark.*)

Granny (*pouring tea for Ting*): Do have some tea.

Ting: Granny, our business is urgent;

We can't stop to enjoy your tea, we must be on our way.

Granny: If your business is so urgent. . . .

(*She has a brain wave.*) We'd better get help from the PLA.

Ting and Radio Operator (*in consternation*): The PLA?

Granny: Yes, they're not far away.

If we report this to them, they'll send out a motorboat.

(*Walks down the steps.*)

Radio Operator (*quickly stopping her*): Wait a moment.

Ting (*hurries forward with an ingratiating smile*): Why!

For a trifle like this

There's no need to trouble the army.

If you'll just lend us a small boat

We shall be eternally grateful.

Granny (*more suspicious*): Oh?

(*Retorts.*) Don't be in such a hurry,

Let me think. (*Sings.*)

The flustered way they're hedging

And their unexpected arrival look suspicious.

Ting (*sings*): *This old fishwife is crafty; we must be careful.*

Chiao-lien (*sings*): *Why is mother behaving so oddly to these strangers?*

Granny (*sings*): *I must send Chiao-lien out to report this emergency.*

Chiao-lien (*offering tea to Ting*): Have some tea.

Ting: Thank you.

Granny (*turns and sees her, looks worried and sings*): *Why is she so blind that she can't tell true from false?*

Ting: Sister-in-law. (*Sings.*) *Won't you persuade your mother*

That to show loyalty to the state you must help us!

(The surge of the tide can be heard.)

Chiao-lien (*pleased*): Mother, the tide is rising.

Granny (*glances at her repressively. To Ting*): We have a boat, director, but it leaks.

Ting and Radio Operator (*disappointed*): Leaks?

Chiao-lien (*in surprise*): Leaks? (*Sings.*)

There's nothing wrong with our boat; why is she lying?

Granny (*sings*): *My daughter still hasn't caught on.*

Ting (*sings*): *Why is she making all these different excuses?*

(Ting signs to the radio operator, who produces a wad of new bank-notes and passes it to Ting.)

Ting: Granny. (*Sings.*)

This is just a small expression of our thanks.

Granny (*struck by an idea, accepts the money. Sings*):

Here's my chance to make Chiao-lien see the light.

(She waves the bank-notes at Chiao-lien significantly.)

Our visitors are certainly generous!

Chiao-lien (*takes the money in surprise. Sings*):

This is all most bewildering;

What cadre ever gave so much money to borrow a boat?

Chang-hai's warning is ringing in my ears.

Granny (*picking up an axe, to make her meaning clearer*): Go quickly, Chiao-lien, to stop the "leak".

Ting: That's it. The quicker the better.

Chiao-lien (*sings*): *It seems monsters have really appeared here!*
(She is worried.)

Granny (*sings*): *I've told you, our boat "leaks".*
Go and see to it quick.

Chiao-lien (*resolutely*): Right! (*She takes the axe. Sings.*)
I'll fix all the "leaks", don't you worry.
(She strikes a pose with her axe then leaves.)

Radio Operator (*suddenly*): I'll go and help her.

Granny (*barring his way*): It's a simple job; why should you bother?

Ting (*steps forward*): Never mind. An extra pair of hands is always useful.

Radio Operator: That's it. I'll be off now. (*Runs off.*)

Granny (*quickly taking up another axe*): He's forgotten to take a tool.
(Prepares to follow.)

Ting (*stopping her*): Don't trouble, granny. Take it easy.

Granny (*restraining herself*): All right then. Have a seat.

Ting: Thank you, thank you.

(Ab-tuan calls offstage: "Granny!")

Granny (*jubilantly*): Here!

(Ab-tuan runs in, startling Ting.)

Granny (*with a show of disapproval*): Ah-tuan,
Didn't I tell you to "cut grass for the sheep"?
I've been waiting for you all this time.

Ah-tuan (*nonplussed*): Cut grass for the sheep?

Granny (*slapping him*): Have you forgotten what I told you just now?
Weren't you listening? (*Secretly indicates Ting.*)

Ah-tuan (*glances at Ting and catches on*): Oh!
(Shrewdly) You want me to take my sickle and crate
And go up the hill to cut grass, eh?
(He goes through the motions of putting a crate on his back and cutting grass.)

Granny (*nods*): Right. Right.

(Ab-tuan puts a basket on the red-tasselled spear over his shoulder and strikes a pose, then leaves.)

Granny (*chuckling*): Such a thoughtless boy.

Ting (*suspiciously*): Who is he?

Granny (*covering up*): My grandson. *(She sits down to weave a net.)*

Ting (*reassured*): So you're a big happy family, eh?

Granny (*suppressing her feelings*): In the old days, though, three of our family died in just one year.

Ting (*hypocritically*): How tragic!

Granny: My five-year-old daughter

Starved to death in our thatched hut.

My husband and son were forced to go out to sea,

And they never came back, disappeared without a trace.

Ting: Who forced them to go?

Granny (*angrily*): That devil Black Shark!

Ting (*dismayed*): Black Shark?

Granny (*unable to contain herself, stands up*): Yes, the deadly enemy of all us fisherfolk in Boulder Bay.

(Suddenly there is a shout "Get moving!" Enter Black Shark, the radio operator, Chiu Erb-neng and other KMT soldiers pushing Chiao-lien before them. The radio operator's face is cut and bruised, his clothes are torn. Chiao-lien is sweating and dishevelled. There is blood on her forehead, her left sleeve is torn and blood-stained. Granny hurries forward to throw her arms around her.)

Black Shark (*angrily to Ting*): So you're still gabbing here.

Radio Operator: I nearly got chopped into two by her!

Black Shark (*recognizing Granny*): Ha, this old fishwife!

Granny: Black Shark!

Black Shark (*threateningly*): So you're still alive?

Granny: Waiting to bury your corpse!

Black Shark: Pah! We'll see who dies first.

(Roars.) Quick, get me a boat!

Granny: You're raving.

Chiao-lien: You blind dog!

Black Shark: I'll cut off your heads!

Ting (*stops him*): Wait.

(Turns to Chiao-lien, cunningly.) Just agree to give us a boat
And I guarantee the safety of your whole family.

Chiao-lien: Bah! Unless we wipe out you beasts
There'll be no safety for the working people.

Granny: Well said!

Black Shark (*bellows*): Get me a boat!

Granny (*laughs heartily*): Open your eyes, Black Shark, and see
Whose is this earth?

Whose is this sky?

Let me tell you:

Here where our five-star red flag flies — *(She mounts the steps, points at the national flag and, together with Chiao-lien, strikes a pose.)*

You will never get a boat!

Black Shark (*looks at the red flag, gnashing his teeth*): The five-star red
flag?

The sight of it burns me up, stabs at my eyes!

So you paupers dream

Of relying on this red flag to rule the land?

Never!

I'll make you tear it down with your own hands!

(Bears down on Granny and roars.) Tear it down!

(Granny slaps his face so that he staggers. She draws herself erect under the red flag.)

Black Shark (*bellows to his men*): Charge!

(The KMT soldiers rush towards her.)

Granny (*in a resounding voice*): Don't you dare!

(Granny swings her trident, making the soldiers shrink back. Granny holding high the trident and Chiao-lien armed with the axe take up a heroic pose to defend the red flag.)

Granny (*sings*): My anger flares as I confront the enemy.

*Not one of these dogs dare come forward!
The red flag is the life of us fisherfolk,
The red flag lights up our sky.
As long as we live, we shall keep the red flag flying;
Shedding our blood for it we'll die content!*

(The sudden blare of a conch throws the bandits into confusion. Black Shark and some of his men rush off helter-skelter.

Chiu Erh-neng and two others move forward to seize Granny. Armed with trident and axe, she and Chiao-lien fight with them until they flee, dropping their guns. Chiu, who has been wounded, hides himself in the bushes.

Three militiamen enter in pursuit of the enemy and grapple with them. One militiaman kicks the gun out of an enemy's hand and the fellow runs away, the militiaman giving chase.

At the same time another militiaman somersaults over a stone parapet and takes on two of the enemy, capturing both.

Granny enters with militiamen from all sides brandishing their weapons. Marching their prisoners off, they strike a pose.)

Granny: Fellow-villagers, catch the spies! *(Leads the others off in pursuit.)*

Hai-ken: Come on!

(The militiamen march the prisoners off.)

(Hai-ken is about to follow them when he spots something moving in the bushes.)

Hai-ken *(pointing his gun at the bushes):* Don't move! Come out!

(Chiu Erh-neng crawls out with a hangdog expression.)

Chiu *(ingratiatingly):* Oh, it's Brother Hai-ken!

Hai-ken *(scanning him):* So? Chiu Erh-neng!

(Two shots are fired not far off. Chiu turns to run.)

Hai-ken *(sternly):* Stop!

Chiu *(turns and kneels to plead):* Don't be too hard on me, brother. I . . . I was fooled by them.

Tell me what you want:

Silver dollars, a watch, a bottle of foreign wine. *(Produces these things and offers them.)*

Hai-ken *(furious):* Bah! *(Sends the bottle flying with the butt of his gun.)*
So you're still up to your low tricks. Come on!

(Chiu gets up slowly, then abruptly hurls the money and watch at Hai-ken. Hai-ken dodges and thrusts with his bayonet. Chiu grabs it with both hands, but Hai-ken kicks him away, then attacks him. Chiu rolls over on the ground, then scrambles up.

Enter Lu Chang-hai from the other side with Hai-yun, the fourth platoon leader and Militiawoman A. Chiu pulls out a dagger to stab Lu; but the latter seizes his wrist and twists it so that the dagger falls from his grasp. Chiu is thrown to the ground.)

Hai-ken: Come on! *(Marches Chiu off.)*

(Offstage Chiao-lien calls, "Chang-hai!" and runs in with Uncle Hsiang Wu and Militiawoman B.)

Chiao-lien: Ah-tuan pulled down the signal tree, then started back, But the devils caught him and dragged him to Hornets' Nest Cave.

(All exclaim in consternation.)

Uncle: Obviously, taking him to the cave,

They're planning to use him to cover their escape.

Hai-yun: The devils!

Chiao-lien: Crafty foxes!

All: What shall we do, company leader?

Lu *(thinks hard. Resolutely):* We must wipe out the bandits

And save Ah-tuan at the same time.

We'll have to change our original plan

And attack the cave from two sides.

Uncle: Chang-hai, that Hornets' Nest Cave with its forest of rocks

Is a labyrinth, easy to hold but hard to attack.

Lu *(with confidence):* To catch a dragon

You have to plunge into the sea.

(*To Hai-yun*) Fighting in the cave
We must be doubly careful:
Bold, resolute
And resourceful.
We must take good care
Not to injure our own brothers in the dark.

Hai-yun (*with feeling*): Right!

Lu: Set out at once!

(*Hai-yun and the two militiawomen run off from the right, the others from the left.*)

(*Lu picks up a rifle abandoned by the enemy, and turns to leave.*)

Chiao-lien: Chang-hai!

(*Lu halts and looks back.*)

Chiao-lien: I . . . (*Hangs her head.*)

Lu (*very pleased with her. Gently*): Here!

(*Chiao-lien raises her head. Lu tosses her the rifle. She catches the rifle and waves it elatedly. Before setting off together they strike a pose.*)

(*Curtain*)

SCENE SEVEN

HORNETS' NEST CAVE

Time: The afternoon.

Place: A cave on Swallow-tail Island.

(*The curtain rises on a dark, eerie scene among jagged rocks. Waves are roaring outside the cave and sporadic gunfire can be heard.*)
(*Offstage Hai-yun sings: "Into the dragon's den."* Enters with two militiawomen armed with rifles.)

Hai-yun (*sings*): *Groping our way through the cave*
(*The three of them grope along and strike a valiant pose.*)

To wipe out the enemy and rescue Ab-tuan,
We are afire with impatience,
Firm in our determination.
I cannot see my outstretched hand before me,
Cannot bear any sound indicating his whereabouts;
I tiptoe forward searching for some clue.

(*The ground in the cave is rough. They wind their way forward holding each other's arms. Suddenly they hear birds taking flight in alarm; at once they withdraw and drop to the ground in a pose.*)

Hai-yun (*in a low voice*): When birds fly off in alarm, there must be someone about.

(*The two militiawomen spring up and cock their guns to charge forward, but Hai-yun bars their way.*)

Hai-yun (*sings*): *Don't open fire rashly or you may wound the wrong people.*

(*Hai-yun and the two militiawomen continue to grope forward until they touch a rock face; they feel this carefully and find an opening. They bend down and crawl through, only to be confronted by another rock face. Again they crouch down and pass through another opening, after which they stand up to strike a pose before continuing on their way. The three of them fall on the slippery rocks and find it hard to struggle to their feet. Their rifles on their backs, they finally succeed in helping each other up. When the two militiawomen stagger, Hai-yun steadies them and they strike another pose.*)

Hai-yun: Let's stop a moment. (*Sings.*)

Let's halt and watch for any movements, then seize our chance
To rescue Ab-tuan and drown the enemy in the sea!

(*Hearing a sound, they slip swiftly behind a rock.*)

(*Enter Black Shark, Ting, the radio operator and other enemy agents with Ab-tuan bound by a rope. An agent with a flashlight leads the way. They fall but get up again. Black Shark tosses a sword to the man in front.*)

(*Ab-tuan glares at them angrily.*)

Black Shark (*threateningly to Ab-tuan*): Go on! Where's the opening to the sea?

Ting: If you lead us to it, we'll reward you.

Ah-tuan: Bah!

Black Shark: If you won't, I'll shoot you!

Ah-tuan (*loudly*): We Young Pioneers have guts,
Even if you cut off my head, I won't show you the way!

Black Shark: I'll kill you! (*Strikes out with his fist.*)

(Ab-tuan dodges the blow and butts Black Shark with his head so that he staggers, then trips up the radio operator. Enemy agents hastily steady their chief. In a towering rage Black Shark draws his gun.)

Ting (*intervening*): Wait!

All the entrances are blocked,
We must fight our way out;
If we keep him,
We can use him as a shield.

Black Shark: All right.

(o9 shines the torch round the cave.)

Ting (*pointing to the top of a stalagmite*): Tie him up there!

o9: Right.

(o9 and another agent gag Ab-tuan then tie him on the stalagmite.)

Black Shark (*to the radio operator*): Send a message quickly to the Second Detachment;

Tell them to send a boat immediately.

Radio Operator: Our radio transmitter's smashed.

Ting: Use the walkie-talkie.

Radio Operator: We're too far away to make contact.

Black Shark: Bastard! Repair the transmitter at once!

Radio Operator: Yes, sir. But where's the opening to the sea?

Black Shark: Go on searching for it.

Radio Operator: Yes, sir.

Black Shark: o9!

o9: Yes, sir.

Black Shark: Watch the boy carefully.

o9: Yes, sir.

(Black Shark feels his bruises and groans.)

Radio Operator: You'd better find somewhere to rest.

(The other agents leave with Black Shark and Ting.

o9 crouches on the rock at Ab-tuan's feet.

Hai-yun and the two militiawomen grope their way out from behind a rock in silence.

o9 senses their presence and flashes his torch round, but the girls avoid it by dropping to the ground.

o9 comes down from the rock to have a look; Hai-yun and the others get up and skirt behind him. As o9 whirls round, they flatten out again so that he fails to see them. Baffled, o9 sits down, laying his torch on the ground.

Hai-yun, bearing this, reaches out and takes the torch.

When o9 discovers his loss, he gropes his way quickly towards Ab-tuan. The militiawomen are feeling their way towards the boy too. They come within a few inches of each other and barely avoid colliding in the dark.

o9 reaches Ab-tuan and in relief squats down to rest when Hai-yun's hand brushes past his face. In alarm he draws his sword and swings it. Militiawoman A leaps on to the rock to confront him. o9 strikes with his sword, but she evades the blow by ducking, then jumps off the rock. o9 strikes out but misses again. The surge of the tide can be heard outside the cave.)

o9 (*turns round doubtfully and touches Hai-yun. He yelps*): Help!

(At once the girls strike out with their bayonets. With a howl o9 falls behind the rock.)

(The radio operator and another agent come out.)

Radio Operator: o9!

(The three girls leap down from the rock and take cover.)

Radio Operator: o9! (*Steps forward and switches on his torch. It is kicked out of his hand by Hai-yun. He yells.*) Help!

(Black Shark, Ting and others dash out. For fear of exposing themselves, they dare not open fire or switch on their torches.)

The radio operator and another enemy grope their way towards Hai-yun and swing their swords, but she dodges. They thrust out wildly with their bayonets at their unseen opponent.

By mistake one fellow kicks over the radio operator, and his sword clangs against Hai-yun's bayonet. Hearing the sound, Black Shark slashes with his sword and kills his own man. Hai-yun probes with her bayonet until its tip touches the radio operator's throat, and he lets out a shout.

Two enemy agents in panic switch on their torches. Black Shark thrusts at Hai-yun with his sword. She dodges. They fight.

Hai-yun shoots one enemy and runs another through with her bayonet; both men fall with a howl.

Black Shark and the rest of his men rush towards Hai-yun, closing in.)

Black Shark (*yells hoarsely*): Catch her!

(Suddenly shots ring out and the torches are extinguished. The enemy flop to the ground.)

Lu Chang-hai and Chiao-lien grope their way in. Chiao-lien finds Hai-yun. Lu feels his way to the stalagmite where he unties Ab-tuan and clasps the boy in his arms.

Two of the enemy bound up the rock and strike at Ab-tuan with daggers. Lu, stretching out both arms to ward off the blows, is wounded in the left arm. He rubs the place quickly, then grabs for the men's daggers, wrenching both of them away and stabbing the two men. They scream and drop dead. The rest of the enemy cower fearfully.

Hai-yun imitates the shrilling of an insect. At the sound, Lu Chang-hai and Ab-tuan leap down from the rock to join the militiawomen.

Chiao-lien, groping in the dark, touches the wound on Lu's arm, and he winces. She whips off the towel round her neck to bandage the wound.)

Lu (*in a low voice*): Get Ah-tuan safely out, quick!

(Hai-yun, Chiao-lien and Militiawomen A and B go off with Ab-tuan.)

(Black Shark, hearing them, gropes towards them and swings his sword but misses.)

(Enemy Agent A enters from the other side.)

Enemy Agent A: Commander!

Black Shark (*bastily*): Quiet!

Enemy Agent A (*in a low voice*): We've found the way out to the sea.

Black Shark: Run for it!

(Hearing them, Lu Chang-hai fires and one enemy falls.)

The scene changes to show the opening of the cave.

Black Shark, Ting and others are scurrying after Enemy Agent A towards the sea. Lu fires and kills two of the enemy.

A flash of lightning lights up the interior of the cave.)

Lu (*in a ringing voice*): Black Shark!

Black Shark (*in alarm*): Ah, Lu Chang-hai!

(Lu charges the enemy. His pistol is wrenched away, but he swiftly kicks the gun from the enemy's hands, seizes Black Shark's sword and striking out fiercely kills two more enemy agents, then whirls round to catch hold of Black Shark. The latter tears himself free from his coat, disclosing his life-jacket. Before Lu can seize him again, the radio operator closes with him. Ting and Black Shark reach the opening and one after the other jump down from the cliff. Lu swings the coat in his hand and kills the radio operator with the sword, then runs to the entrance and dives into the sea.)

(Thunder and lightning. The sea roars.)

(Curtain)

SCENE EIGHT

WOLF FANG REEF

Time: Late at night.

Place: A lonely reef close to the open sea.

(As the curtain rises, dark clouds lour, angry waves pound the shore and on a tall boulder gleams a beacon lantern.)

(Black Shark and Ting stagger in, clutching their life-jackets and gasping for breath, both utterly exhausted. The chug of a motorboat is heard. In alarm they pause to listen.)

Ting: Are Red patrol boats searching the sea? (*Ducks quickly behind a rock.*)

Black Shark: Don't panic. In this darkness, with the waves so high, we won't be seen.

Ting: Where are we?

Black Shark: On Wolf Fang Reef.

Ting (*in despair*): Hell! Still not out of their cordon.

Black Shark: Don't worry. (*They flop down on a rock.*)

This isn't far from the open sea,

And I've sent out an urgent signal

Calling the Second Detachment to come to our rescue.

Ting (*pleased, stands up*): The Second Detachment?

Black Shark: All we need is a dinghy

To make good our escape.

Ting (*bearing a sudden sound panics*): Someone's coming!

Can Lu Chang-hai be on our track?

Black Shark (*tensely, grabbing for his gun*): Impossible.

Without a life-jacket he'd have been drowned.

(*They tiptoe off.*)

The wind howls, the sea roars.

Offstage Lu sings: "My wound smarting, I've battled through the waves."

Lu Chang-hai trudges painfully in and plants one foot on the rock, then pulling himself up strikes a pose. Leaving the rock he limps forward, wipes the sweat from his face and strikes another pose.)

Lu (*sings*): *I leapt from the cliff in pursuit of the enemy,
Fought my way through rapid currents and dangerous shallows,
Hatred blazing in my heart.*

(He looks around, takes a step to the left, slips and falls, then quickly gets up and clambers on to a rock, feeling his wound. Slowly he raises his head to gaze raptly into the distance, wiping his sweat.)

No lone wild goose am I, flying all alone,

My hundreds of millions of countrymen are with me.

Wolf Fang Reef may be far from our coast,

Yet the light from Chungnanhai shines over every inch of our territory.

To cleanse this globe for a bright sunlit future

Today we must wipe out all pests and monsters!

I have mounted the reef to spy out the fleeing marauders.

(Climbs a rock and scans the sea. Having caught sight of something he leaps down.)

A craft out at sea: the enemy may be sending reinforcements.

A Communist has iron resolve, steel sinews;

No matter how outnumbered, beset by perils,

I swear to wipe out the remnant enemy and return in triumph.

(Raises his arm and strikes a pose. At the sound of approaching footsteps he swiftly takes cover.)

(Black Shark and Ting steal in.)

Ting (*trembling*): I can't get rid of the feeling of being followed.

Black Shark: It's all nerves; you're imagining things.

Ting (*sighs*): We're surrounded on all sides; this is the end for us.

Black Shark: If not for you, would we be in this mess?

Ting: Whose fault is it we've landed in this trap?

Whose trusted liaison man let us down?

Black Shark: That was due to a sudden change in the situation.

Ting: Who changed course so that our boat was wrecked on the rocks?

Black Shark: Misfortunes can't be foretold — they strike like lightning.

But you (*rounding on Ting*)

Keep raising objections and undermining morale,

Simply trying to save your skin when things get hot;

You're responsible for the loss of our whole unit!

Ting: That's a bloody lie!

Black Shark (*threateningly*): You're infringing army discipline!

Ting (*suppressing his anger*): All right, all right.

Others will know on whom the blame should fall,

I won't argue with you.

Right now we're in deadly danger;

We can neither return to Taiwan nor land on the mainland;

In my humble opinion, our only hope

Is to go to Hongkong or Macao.

Black Shark: So, Ting Wen-chai,

You're a traitor to our Kuomintang and our country! (*Seizes Ting by the collar.*)

Ting (*protesting*): I'm thinking of your safety,
Of saving your life.

Black Shark: The hell you are! (*He knocks Ting over.*)

(*Lu Chang-hai appears from behind the rocks and listens.*)

(*Offstage an enemy agent shouts "Who's there?" Lu, Black Shark and Ting are startled.*)

(*Offstage the same voice shouts: "Shark, shark!"*)

Black Shark (*overjoyed*): Seal, seall! The shark is here!

(*Enter Enemy Agent B with three others, panting and carrying a wireless transmitter and some rifles.*)

Enemy Agent B: Commander Heil

Black Shark: Where's the dinghy?

Enemy Agent B: Over there.

(*Lu Chang-hai pulls out a dagger and slips away.*)

Enemy Agent B: After the Second Detachment received your signal.

We were ordered to come by boat to reinforce you.

We have brought guns, ammunition, a transmitter

And a cable from Taiwan. (*Passes him the cable and switches on his torch.*)

Black Shark (*reading*): For repeated failure to effect a landing

You deserve to be court-martialled.

We are giving you a chance to atone for your crime —

Don't just try to steer clear of danger.

If you run away again

You will not be pardoned but shot!

Ting (*gasps*): Shot!

Black Shark (*flustered*): Effect a landing,

Why don't they come and try it?

(*Making up his mind*) Never mind,

Let's go to the boat!

(*Black Shark and the others are about to leave when Enemy Agent C runs in.*)

Enemy Agent C (*wailing*): Damn and blast it!

The Reds have scuttled our dinghy!

Black Shark: Reds? How many of them? (*Seizes Enemy Agent C by the collar.*)

Enemy Agent C (*trembling*): Just... one.

Black Shark: Curse you! I'll kill you! (*Knocks the man over and reaches for his gun.*)

Ting (*hastily intervening*): Steady on. You mustn't fire

Or the Red patrol boats may hear it.

Black Shark (*to Enemy Agent C*): Scram! Catch that Red for me,
you dog!

Ting: Wait! (*Apprehensively*) That must have been Lu Chang-hai's
doing.

Black Shark (*taken aback*): Lu Chang-hai?

(*Lu reappears behind the rocks.*)

Black Shark (*reflects, then gives a sardonic laugh*): Hmm, I need a pass
to get out of the bay;

If we catch him alive, we'll not have to go back empty-handed.

Ting (*pointing at the transmitter*): Good, I'll send word

To the Second Detachment and get them to come to fetch us.

Black Shark (*reflects*): No, that won't do.

Ting: Why not?

Black Shark: A ship that size would be spotted

If it entered coastal waters.

Ting: What's to be done then?

Black Shark: Tell them to send another dinghy. (*Leaves with the
other men.*)

(*Ting fiddles with the transmitter and sighs.*)

Lu (*emerging quietly from behind the rocks, aside*): So there's a Second
Detachment out at sea?

(*Thinks.*) We must find some way to lure it inside the cordon
Made by all our naval vessels.

Catch the lot in one sweep like turtles in a pot!

(*Approaches Ting from behind. In a low but forceful voice.*)

Ting Wen-chai!

Ting (*turns his head. In consternation he falls to the ground*): Ah, Lu
Chang-hai! (*Quickly draws his pistol.*) Don't move!

(*Lu reaches for the hand-grenade at his belt and takes a step forward.
Ting shrinks back.*)

Lu: Why don't you fire? Afraid you'd miss?

Ting (*with a show of calmness*): Bah! You want me to alert your
patrols with a shot, eh?

Lu: Hmm. You're not such a fool after all.

Ting: Our men are all around,
You'll be captured alive.

Lu: However many of you turtles there are,
I shall catch you all in my net.

Ting: You're all on your own.

Lu: Seven hundred million people are behind me.

(*Sound of a motorboat.*)

Lu (*climbs to a higher spot*): Listen!
The net is spread, our forces are approaching;
You can neither fly up to the sky nor hide underground.

Ting (*with bravado*): No, our men will catch you first.

Lu (*contemptuously*): Do you mean your Second Detachment?
They're doomed to destruction too.

(*Ting is flabbergasted and has nothing to say.*)

Lu (*challengingly*): Time and again you've failed to make a landing,
And now you are a commander without men;
Even if you were to escape
What have you got to show your higher-ups?
(*Sarcastically*) Don't forget "you will not be pardoned but shot".
If you fail, yours will be a glorious death.

Ting (*shivers and mutters to himself*): Is this really the end?

Lu (*tempting him*): No, there's a way out for you.

Ting: A way out?

Lu: Lay down your arms, stop resisting and surrender to the people.
This is your only way out, your only hope.

Ting (*dubiously*): The only way out?

Lu (*laughs coldly*): Think you can save your skin
By going to Hongkong or Macao?
Black Shark would never let you go.
Your secret landing has failed, your unit's wiped out;
Instead of fighting you fled, turned a deserter —
He will blame it all on you!

(*Ting is shaken.*)

Lu: He will say you are a traitor.

(*Ting shivers again.*)

Lu (*gravely*): To be his scapegoat —
That will be your fate.

Ting (*staggers and collapses on to the rock. In despair*): What do you
want me to do?

Lu: To send an order to the Second Detachment
To proceed to Wolf Fang Reef and await further orders.

Ting (*uneasily*): Well, all right. (*Switches on the transmitter.*) Seal, seal!

Lu (*turns off the transmitter*): Wait.
(*Looks at him sternly.*) Let me tell you this:
If you play any tricks, you've had it.
Your only way out is to come over to our side;
Death or life — just think it over,
Which road do you choose?

Ting: How can a man with my record
Hope to be spared?

Lu: For a meritorious action
You would even be rewarded.

Ting: What guarantee can you give me?

Lu: This is our Party policy,
There's no gainsaying it.

Ting: So!

Lu: Quickly lay down your arms.

Ting (*hesitates*): But. . .

(*Lu taking him unawares knocks the pistol out of his hand.*)

Ting (*hastily*): I was meaning to surrender!

(*Offstage Enemy Agent B calls out: "Who's there?" Lu quickly picks up the gun and catches hold of Ting's arm.*)

Lu: This is a test for you.

Make them clear off! (*Pulls Ting to the rock and hides behind it himself.*)

(*Enter Enemy Agent B with another man.*)

Enemy Agent B: Who's there?

Ting: Are you blind, you fool?

Enemy Agent B: Vice-commander Ting!

Ting (*pointing in another direction*): Go and scout round over there.

Enemy Agent B: Yes, sir.

(*The two agents leave.*)

(*Lu reappears gripping Ting's arm.*)

Lu: Send this message, quick:

Shark's landing has succeeded according to plan;

Come full speed to Wolf Fang Reef without delay.

Ting: Right. (*Switches on the transmitter.*) Hello, seal; this is Shark.

The landing has succeeded according to plan,

Come full speed to Wolf Fang Reef without delay.

Lu (*bearing a sound, tugs Ting to his feet*): I'm afraid I shall have to hide you behind the rocks for the time being.

Ting: Certainly,

I quite understand,

Anything you say.

(*Lu escorts Ting off behind the boulder on which shines a beacon.*)

(*Above the roar of the waves can be heard the chug of an engine.*)

(*Lu reappears on the boulder.*)

Lu (*gazing seaward elatedly*): Fine, the Second Detachment has come in force! (*Leaps down the boulder. Sings.*)

I see the enemy have all fallen into our trap;

I must summon our troops and civilians to wipe them out.

But if I shout to my comrades-in-arms,

My voice will be drowned by the roar of the wind and waves;

If I fire my gun to alert them. . . .

(*Raises his pistol but does not press the trigger.*)

The sound of shooting at night might scare off the enemy boat.

(*He paces to and fro anxiously, then climbs another rock and notices the beacon. His face lights up.*)

This flashing beacon for shipping

Can be used to send a signal;

But how am I to dye it red?

(*Male voices offstage sing in chorus.*)

Lu (*frantically pounds his knee with his fist and winces from the pain in his wounded arm. His eye falls on the blood-stained towel round it and he*

exults): This blood-stained towel! (*Sings.*)

This towel wrapped round the lantern will summon my comrades!

Would my red heart's-blood could burst into flame. . . .

(*Unwraps the towel, runs up the boulder and ties the blood-stained towel over the lantern. At once a red light shines across the sea.*)

(*A mixed chorus offstage sings: "The boundless sea and sky are irradiated."*)

Enter Black Shark with several enemy agents.)

Black Shark: Ah, Lu Chang-hai!

(*The enemy, taking cover behind the rocks, aim their guns at Lu. Lu, half concealed by a rock, confronts them boldly.*)

Black Shark (*laughs grimly*): So, Lu Chang-hai,

This time you've fallen into my trap.

Lu: Black Shark!

It's you who are trapped by the whole Chinese people!

Black Shark: Look round you.

Hemmed in by our troops, how can you escape?

Lu: Look out to sea.

With all China in arms, you will never get away.

Enemy Agent B (*spots the red beacon and is aghast*): Look, a red light!

Black Shark: So you're signalling,

Trying to alert your troops, eh?

Lu (*cuttingly*): We're putting up lanterns for the festival,

And waiting for you turtles to enter our pot.

Black Shark (*furious*): You... Get him!

(The enemy agents start forward, but halt in dismay at sight of the hand-grenade in Lu's hand.)

Black Shark: If you want to live, take down that red cloth!

Lu: Never, unless you raze the reef and drain the sea dry!

Black Shark: Come with me to Taiwan,

I'll guarantee you a good future.

Lu: Taiwan will be liberated

And your gang exterminated!

Black Shark: Think well — this is a matter of life or death.

Lu: I live and die for the Party, true to the last!

Black Shark (*hoarsely*): If you refuse, you're done for.

Lu (*resonantly*): I shall shed my blood to show my loyalty!

Black Shark (*to his men*): Smash that beacon!

Lu (*roars*): Don't you dare touch it!

(Enemy agents charge up the boulder. One thrusts at Lu with his bayonet while another reaches out to smash the beacon. Lu seizes the enemy's gun and protects the beacon. After a fight, the enemy are beaten back.)
(A voice calls offstage: "The Second Detachment has come!")
(Enter the commander of the Second Detachment at the head of his men.)

Second Detachment Commander: We've come in force to coordinate with you.

Black Shark: Dammit! Who ordered you to come?

(Lu Chang-bai throws back his head to laugh long and loud. A conch blares.)

Enemy Agent B: Confound it, we're surrounded!

(The enemy panic.)

Black Shark: To the boat! *(Turns and fires at Lu.)*

(Lu dodges and raises his hand-grenade. Black Shark and the rest of the enemy scatter and run. Lu throws the hand-grenade, which explodes in the distance.)

(The sound of army bugles and conches rings out.)

Lu (*raising his arm calls*): Comrades, wipe them all out!

(Amidst a tumult of bugle calls and shouts, PLA soldiers and local militiamen race across the stage.)

The beacon shines bright, its red light focusing on Lu Chang-bai.

The stage turns dark, the scene changes.

The stage lights up again, showing the open sea and a corner of the reef.

The commander of the Second Detachment and other enemy agents leap into the sea, with the militiamen in hot pursuit.

Enter Black Shark and one of his men, swimming. A militiaman gives chase, striking out towards Black Shark, who wards him off and escapes by plunging under the water.

Enter Lu Chang-bai and others, swimming. They support the militiaman and continue the chase.

Enter a PLA soldier pursuing an enemy agent. The fellow threatens him with a dagger, but the PLA man wrenches the dagger away and stabs him in the waist and the neck. After a fierce fight the wounded enemy slips off. The PLA man gives chase.

Three militiamen cross the stage pursuing three enemy agents.

The commander of the Second Detachment and several agents try to swim out to sea. They are intercepted by some PLA men, who fight them. Three of the enemy are caught by our naval forces.

Enter Hai-ken, Hai-yun, Chiao-lien and a militiawoman rowing a boat. The commander of the Second Detachment and his men flounder in the

water. Seeing that the people in the boat are mostly women, they try to seize it. Hai-ken jumps into the water with an oar to put up a fierce fight and captures the commander of the Second Detachment.

Hai-yun, Chiao-lien and the militiawoman chase the enemy with nets. They fight. Exit Chiao-lien and the militiawoman in pursuit. Hai-yun takes on one of the enemy single-handed and after a fierce fight puts him to flight. Two others attack her. She pretends to swim away, while Chiao-lien and the militiawoman wait until the enemy are close enough, then cast their nets to catch them and pull them off.

Granny Tseng, Uncle Hsiang Wu and Ah-tuan row over the waves with prisoners in their boat. Ting, among the captives, is not bound like the others.

Hai-ken, Hai-yun, Chiao-lien and the militiawoman row a boat full of prisoners across the stage.

Black Shark tries to swim away under water. He comes to the surface, hears the blare of a conch and dives down again in panic. Militiamen cross the stage searching for him.

Lu Chang-hai armed with a trident chases Black Shark. Black Shark stabs at him with his dagger, but Lu parries the blow with his trident, then wrenches the dagger from his opponent's grasp and goes on attacking until Black Shark flounders helplessly in the water.

Granny, Uncle, Hai-yun, Hai-ken and Chiao-lien, together with other militia and PLA soldiers, come rowing in shouting battle cries. Lu picks up Black Shark and heaves him into their boat, then springs aboard.

All converge around Lu Chang-hai and, their weapons pointed at Black Shark, strike a militant pose.

Conches blare, red flags flutter in the sea breeze. Sailing through the waves under the bright crimson morning clouds, the heroic fisherfolk return victorious.)

(Final Curtain)

LU HSUN'S WRITINGS

The Other Side of Celebrating the Recovery of Shanghai and Nanking

In Canton, it seems to me, grand commemorations and celebrations are unusually common. This is an inevitable phenomenon as the revolution makes headway and is victorious. Twice, already, I had rejoiced by myself on the days that I read the dispatches announcing the recovery of Shanghai and Nanking. One of the penalties for "rejoicing while others exert themselves" is this difficult task of having to rack my brains to write something to order. Actually I am not too well fitted for jobs of this kind, for as soon as I take up my pen my thoughts always stray a thousand *li* away. So even now, though I would of course like to write something appropriate, my mind keeps wandering and fine, presentable sentiments are as hard to recapture as a kite with a snapped string. I suddenly remember the few youngsters I saw yesterday at Whampoa where they had come to join the cadets' corps; only when seeing them did I realize that those who brave death at the front are people like these, and I really should feel ashamed of tricking them into applauding my rambling remarks in the classroom.* Then I suddenly think back sixteen years to

*Two days before Lu Hsun wrote this essay, he was invited to give a talk at the Whampoa Military Academy on "Literature of a Revolutionary Period".

another time when Nanking was recovered,* and a stone tablet was erected for the martyrs; after the second year of the republic the tablet was demolished by Chang Hsun,** but this year it is possible to set up another. Again I suddenly recall the news published in Hong-kong's *Hsunbuan Daily* of Li Ta-chao's arrest in Peking;*** then his round face and drooping black Chinese-style moustache rise before my eyes and I wonder how he is now.

In the regions of darkness, the work of counter-revolutionaries is also going quietly ahead, and although they leave lamentations behind them there are also some people who rejoice. Lamentations and rejoicing, while certainly vastly different, are yet alike in that neither of them affects the situation. The final victory does not depend on how many people rejoice, but on how many fight on to the end. I remember a periodical which quoted these lines from Lenin: **“The first thing is not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third is to give the enemy the finishing stroke, for he has been beaten, but by no means crushed.”******

Russia is after all the old home of revolution, and Lenin an old hand at revolution; the above statement could only be made by one with a deep understanding of the reasons for the success or failure of previous revolutions and considerable experience in this line himself. The repeated setbacks suffered by Chinese revolutionaries in the past were due, I think, to the fact that they overlooked this. At the least little success, they grew so intoxicated by songs of triumph that their muscles relaxed and they forgot to fight on, whereupon the enemy seized the chance to strike back.

*Referring to the 1911 Revolution against imperialism and feudalism led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, when the revolutionary army captured Nanking.

**A northern warlord and former officer in the Ching army. After being defeated in the 1911 Revolution, he attacked and entered Nanking again in September 1913 with the support of Yuan Shih-kai, chief of the northern warlords.

***Li Ta-chao (1889—1927) was one of the earliest Marxists in China and one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party. On April 6, 1927 he was arrested in Peking by the warlord Chang Tso-lin, who had him secretly murdered on the 28th. Lu Hsun, while in Peking, had known Li well.

****From *Lenin*, a speech delivered by Stalin at a memorial meeting of the Kremlin Military School.

The year before last I wrote a short essay arguing that “dogs that have fallen into the water” must still be beaten. Some simple souls thought this harsh and unforgiving, too lacking in magnanimity and leniency; besides, if I treated others in this way they would pay me back in my own coin, and there would be no end to reprisals. However, though I cannot vouch for other countries, has there ever been a victor in China who was not harsh and unforgiving? To take some recent examples, didn't the first few emperors of the Ching Dynasty and Yuan Shih-kai* after the second year of the republic hound and wipe out all who opposed them? Only they paid lip-service to magnanimity and leniency, as well as kindness and benevolence; nor were they as explicit as Lenin. Lenin after all was a Russian who said what he thought, being much more straightforward than us Chinese. But even in China, in actual fact, up to the present, as for such fine-sounding expressions as magnanimity, leniency, kindness and benevolence, those who put them into practice have generally failed, the ones to succeed being those who only preached them. However, they deceived a pack of fools who believed in them.

Celebrations do not affect the revolution; at most they are just a kind of embellishment. Of course it is fine to have a lot of people celebrating, singing and growing intoxicated by revolution, but sometimes this may also lead to emasculation of the revolutionary spirit. As the power of the revolution increases, more and more people are bound to be in favour of it. After the unification of the whole country, I fear even the Research Group will be talking of revolution too. Didn't the *Modern Critic* change its tune at the end of last year? Comparing this with their comments at the time of the March 18th Incident, I really suspect they must all have got hold of some miraculous drug which has all of a sudden made new men of them. I used to have a biased view of Buddhism, thinking the ascetic Hinayana sect was

*Yuan Shih-kai (1859—1916), a war minister of the Ching Dynasty, after the 1911 Revolution became the most powerful of the northern warlords. In 1913 he seized the position of provisional president of the Chinese Republic, and persecuted the revolutionaries headed by Sun Yat-sen. In December 1915 he attempted to set himself up as a new emperor, but this was opposed by the whole Chinese people and he died soon after his failure to restore the monarchy.

genuine Buddhism; by the time rich men who drank wine and ate meat could, if they fasted just once, call themselves Buddhists and count as true believers, though the fine name Mahayana was given to the religion and it spread even more widely, because it was so easy to join this sect it became emasculated and may finally come to nothing. The same applies to revolution. The strict revolutionaries who fight on march forward, leaving behind them wide areas which have had revolution, so that we can relax, sing and cheer and appear in revolutionary colours too, whereas actually we have nothing at all to do with revolution. Once there are many people of this sort, the revolutionary spirit may grow emasculated and tenuous then gradually fade away, to be followed by retrogression.

Kwangtung is where the revolution started; so it must be the first place to become the rear, and the first to be exposed to the danger I mentioned too.

Today, at this time of great celebrations, I venture to present these disjointed remarks to the revolutionary people of Canton; and I sincerely hope they will not be disheartened by these words spoken out of turn, for there will be plenty of time to make amends in future. If they are disheartened all the same, it will be evidence that the revolutionary spirit has already become emasculated.

April 10, 1927

On Lu Hsun's Long Lost Essay

"The Other Side of Celebrating the Recovery of Shanghai and Nanking", written on April 10, 1927, was published on May 5 that year in No. 11 of *New Outlet*, a supplement of the Canton newspaper *National News*. This essay, forgotten for nearly fifty years, was re-discovered only last year by the Sun Yat-sen University Library in Canton. The recovery of Shanghai and Nanking refers to the capture of these cities from the northern warlords on March 22 and 24 during the Northern Expedition of the revolutionary forces in 1927, when Lu Hsun was teaching in Sun Yat-sen University in Canton.

After the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, rapid headway was made in the Chinese revolution. The Northern Expedition against imperialism and feudalism in 1926 and 1927, carried out on the basis of the first co-operation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party, won a swift series of victories and reached its zenith after the capture of Shanghai and Nanking. However, the rightist faction in the Kuomintang headed by Chiang Kai-shek was stepping up its schemes to betray and crush the revolution. This critical situation prompted Lu Hsun to reflect deeply on some key problems concerning the future of the revolution.

In this essay Lu Hsun quoted certain of Lenin's comments on the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, using these as the basis from which to put forward his own views.

When the revolution is going ahead successfully, the revolutionary dictatorship must be strengthened. This point is specially emphasized in this essay.

Lu Hsun had experience of the 1911 Revolution which overthrew the Ching Dynasty, as well as the Northern Expedition then under way. Having fought for many years in times when reaction was rampant and China plunged in darkness, he was well aware that "a long period of despotism makes awakening difficult". And he therefore set tremendous store by the victory of the revolution. Back in the days when the 1911 Revolution was making progress and the revolutionary forces had taken Nanking, he had spoken up to urge the leaders of the revolution not to show any mercy to the reactionaries or allow the revolution to stop halfway. However, the bourgeoisie which led the 1911 Revolution compromised with the imperialist and feudal forces, so that the political power was usurped by the northern warlord Yuan Shih-kai and the 1911 Revolution ended in failure.

Now, sixteen years later in Kwangtung, the province considered as the revolutionary base, Lu Hsun saw revolutionary slogans everywhere and heard songs in praise of victory on all sides as people celebrated the recovery of Nanking and Shanghai. He naturally shared in their joy. As he wrote in this essay, "Twice, already, I had rejoiced by myself on the days that I read the dispatches announcing the recovery of Shanghai and Nanking." But historical experience and his own observation of reality convinced him of the need to strengthen working-class dictatorship so that this victory over which the masses were rejoicing would not be negated.

This essay gives a profound elucidation of Lenin's instruction "not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast". In that time of widespread rejoicing, Lu Hsun wanted to warn the revolutionary masses not to be so intoxicated by songs of triumph at the least success that their muscles relaxed and they forgot to fight on; for in that case the enemy might seize the chance to strike back. It was in fact just two days after Lu Hsun issued this warning that Chiang Kai-shek

staged his counter-revolutionary coup, massacring Communists and revolutionaries so that the Northern Expedition ended in defeat. Later Lu Hsun recalled this with sadness more than once, saying, "All my warnings have actually now been verified by facts; I only happened to make these predictions a few days in advance."

We must always be on our guard lest opportunists sneak into the revolutionary camp. In time of victory, especially, we must beware lest these "maggots" corrupt and sabotage the revolution from within, robbing us of the fruits of victory. This is another important contention in this essay.

Lu Hsun wrote in this essay, "As the power of the revolution increases, more and more people are bound to be in favour of it. After the unification of the whole country, I fear even the Research Group will be talking of revolution too." The Research Group was a reactionary clique which carried out an opportunistic political programme with the backing of the northern warlords. During a revolutionary upheaval, whenever the revolution gains fresh ground, all types of people will move over to its side, enabling some bad characters and careerists to infiltrate the revolutionary ranks too. Lu Hsun was aware of this danger and mentioned the *Modern Critic* as an example. This magazine was a weekly edited by certain comprador bourgeois men of letters such as Hu Shih. On March 18, 1926, when Tuan Chi-jui, head of the provisional government of the northern warlords, massacred patriotic Chinese in Peking, the *Modern Critic* actually slandered the patriots who were murdered as rioters in an attempt to excuse the butcher Tuan Chi-jui's crime. By the later half of 1926, however, when the Northern Expedition was advancing successfully, this magazine completely changed its tune and tried to join the revolutionary side. Lu Hsun compared such opportunists with those wealthy gourmands who, if they fasted just once, claimed to belong to the Mahayana sect of Buddhism and to be "true believers". He pointed out trenchantly, "Once there are many people of this sort, the revolutionary spirit may grow emasculated and tenuous then gradually fade away, to be followed by retrogression." Lu Hsun affirmed that in order to consolidate the gains of the revolution and prevent the return of the reactionary forces, we must prevent all opportunists

from sneaking into the revolutionary camp and resolutely wipe them out if they do; otherwise they may undermine the revolution.

So another important point made in this essay is that the enemy must be thoroughly eliminated.

Lu Hsun believed that, in dealing with a class enemy who has been defeated but not completely wiped out, we must "beat a dog that has fallen into the water" and carry the revolution through to the end. If we let ourselves be deceived by such fine terms as "magnanimity, leniency, kindness and benevolence", then we are "a pack of fools". In this connection he referred again to his famous essay *On Deferring "Fair Play"* in which, in 1925, he attacked the Confucian Doctrine of the Mean and thoroughly refuted the views of those who argued that to go on beating a dog which had already fallen into the water was too harsh and unforgiving. He asked, "Has there ever been a victor in China who was not harsh and unforgiving?... In actual fact, up to the present, as for such fine-sounding expressions as magnanimity, leniency, kindness and benevolence, those who put them into practice have generally failed, the ones to succeed being those who only preached them. However, they deceived a pack of fools who believed in them." This is an excellent explanation of the necessity for the revolutionary dictatorship. For such terms as "magnanimity, leniency, kindness and benevolence" are simply fine-sounding expressions used by the reactionaries to deceive the masses and mask their iniquitous rule. So a revolutionary party and revolutionary people must not talk of leniency towards the enemy: all the diehards who have not laid down their arms and go on resisting must be ruthlessly suppressed by the revolution. Only then can we consolidate the gains of the revolution.

"The Other Side of Celebrating the Recovery of Shanghai and Nanking" is also an important document for the study of Lu Hsun's ideological development. When he wrote this essay he was evolving from a revolutionary democrat to a Communist. From it we can see that he was already making a serious study of Marxism-Leninism. For he used Lenin's words here as the basis of his argument, and gave a correct and penetrating analysis of Lenin's viewpoint. This shows that by this time Marxism-Leninism was already a positive factor in Lu Hsun's thinking.

NOTES ON ART

Chen Hua and Hsin Pu

A True Bastion of Iron

— on the revolutionary modern Peking opera *Boulder Bay*

Boulder Bay, published in this issue, is a modern revolutionary Peking opera dealing with the life of some fisherfolk on the Chinese coast and the class struggle in China in the early sixties.

China confronted a fierce tempest of class struggle with enemies inside and outside the country in the early sixties. While the imperialists, revisionists and other foreign counter-revolutionaries joined in a vociferous anti-China chorus, the Chiang Kai-shek clique in Taiwan seized the chance to try to establish a "corridor" for commando raids on the southeast coast, in the hope of re-establishing their counter-revolutionary rule. During this period they sent more than twenty groups of secret agents by sea or by air to the mainland; but all these bands were destroyed by our armed forces and local militia. In this struggle against secret enemy agents, many brave and resourceful heroes and heroines emerged from the revolutionary masses along the coast; among them were militiamen, militiawomen and fisherfolk who were ready to give their lives to defeat the enemy and

defend the dictatorship of the proletariat. These millions of people staunchly safeguarding the revolution formed a true bastion of iron for our socialist motherland.

With this as the background, this opera presents the story of the militia of Boulder Bay and warmly endorses Chairman Mao's brilliant strategic maxim that everyone in our nation should be a soldier. Boulder Bay, like all other harbours on the Chinese coast, is a bastion of iron where the revolutionary masses while going about their fishing carry guns. There is organized joint defence by PLA men and the local militia; every house is a sentry post and everyone a soldier. They patrol by day, keep a sharp lookout at night, and have evolved a good system of signalling, using "signal trees" in the daytime and red lanterns at night. As soon as enemy activity is detected they blow a conch, whereupon militiamen converge from all sides and co-ordinate with the regular armed forces to wipe out the invaders.

The opera gives praise to the militia leader Lu Chang-hai, the old fisherwoman Granny Tseng and other heroic characters who show a high degree of vigilance and are quick to discover and thwart hidden enemies. It criticizes Lu Chang-hai's wife Chiao-lien and the head of the fishing team Hai-ken, who have forgotten class struggle; the latter not only fails to keep a firm grip on his gun, but even mistakes a traitor for a friend and lets himself be utilized by the enemy.

The Party branch secretary Lu Chang-hai is the chief hero of this opera. To bring out and emphasize the main theme, he is made the central figure around whom unfold sharp and complex dramatic conflicts. Lu's fierce struggle with Black Shark, commander of a KMT commando unit, is the main conflict; but the opera also describes his contradiction and clash with his wife Chiao-lien and his friend Hai-ken. This heroic figure is always presented in the midst of struggle, and his character is fully rounded out. Lu's fight with Black Shark epitomizes the basic class conflict between millions of China's labouring masses and the landlord-bourgeois class. In this major conflict with the enemy which runs through the whole opera, Lu's wisdom and courage are revealed. He deals ably with sudden changes in the situation as in the third scene, for example, when he pretends to be a good friend of Chiu Erh-neng and outwits the enemy agent o8

who has come to Chiu's house to make contact disguised as a security officer. The way Lu gets o8 to inform him of the secret landing planned shows intelligence and finesse of a high order. He can defeat the enemy even when they are numerous and he is all alone, as in the eighth scene, when he is wounded but still pursues the enemy; then with the indomitable spirit of a Communist he confronts them single-handed and overawes them, while by wrapping a blood-stained towel round the signal lantern he summons the people's forces and succeeds in wiping out the enemy. This reveals his infinite loyalty to the revolutionary cause.

To emphasize the main theme — everyone is a soldier — and to depict various aspects of the chief hero's thought and character, the first scene describes Lu Chang-hai's conflict with his wife, and the fourth his conflict with the head of the fishing team Hai-ken. These conflicts express the clash and struggle between two ways of thinking, that of one who is vigilant, ever ready to resist the enemy, and that of people deluded into thinking that all is peaceful and well. The events showing how Chiao-lien and Hai-ken gradually waken up to the truth help to bring out Lu Chang-hai's firm principled stand, his deep feeling for his class comrades, and the spirit of a vanguard fighter for the proletariat.

Lu Chang-hai is on the one hand an ordinary fisherman working with his mates; on the other he is a good Party cadre who is skilled in doing ideological work. An intrepid militiaman who fights fearlessly against the enemy, he is at the same time a leader with tact, good judgment and a deep understanding of Party policy.

The opera depicts for us the whole development of Lu's character. When a child, he has to beg for food in the streets and huddles, hungry and cold, under the eaves of other people's houses. To avenge his father, he charges into the fishing depot and gets cruelly whipped and slashed with a sword by the local despot Black Shark. In the War of Resistance Against Japan, to save his fellow-villagers he pulls down the signal tree to summon the guerrillas, who come and rout the invaders. He grows up with class hatred and ardent patriotism in his heart, becoming tempered and matured in the flames of war. After Liberation he joins the PLA and upon being demobbed returns to

work as a local cadre in his village. He makes a careful study of Mao Tsetung Thought and becomes a vanguard of the proletariat well tested in revolutionary struggle. Hence he feels fierce hatred against the class enemy and has infinite love and loyalty for the people and his socialist motherland.

The opera also gives a well-rounded picture of the girl Hai-yun and the old fisherman Uncle Hsiang Wu, two typical representatives of the heroic militia. Hai-yun is always active in the front line of the struggle. To rescue little Ah-tuan and wipe out the KMT agents, she goes unflinchingly into Hornets' Nest Cave, risking her life to fight the enemy; she also takes a principled stand in her clash with her brother Hai-ken who has forgotten class struggle. Uncle Hsiang Wu is an experienced old man, a veteran militiaman and wise counsellor. It is he who discovers the sheath of the dagger and the white mask in the tree; and the valuable material he supplies about enemy activities shows that he has rich experience in class struggle and keen vigilance.

The opera also describes the old fisherwoman Granny Tseng who insists on marching with the militia and young Ah-tuan who longs to join it too. Granny Tseng, on a visit to Boulder Bay from Swallow-tail Island, as soon as she hears the conch calling the militia to assemble wants to take part in the fight despite her age. She is quick to see through the tricks of the KMT agents who come to ask for a boat. When they want to tear down the five-star red flag which represents our socialist motherland, she grimly takes up her trident to defend it and angrily curses the bandits. This struggle displays her loyalty to the revolution and to her motherland, for this old fisherwoman who has had a bitter life in the old days now sets great store by the fruits of liberation. Little Ah-tuan is intelligent enough to run off and tug the signal tree to give the alarm in a critical situation. After he is caught by the enemy he shows utter fearlessness, refusing to act as their guide even if they cut off his head. So Granny Tseng and Ah-tuan, representing the old and the young generation of fisherfolk, both help to strengthen the bastion of iron. Through the depiction of these characters, the opera shows that Chairman Mao's thinking is deeply rooted in the hearts of the masses and is being handed down from generation to generation.

The script and staging of this opera have distinctive features too. The whole plot, the characterization, as well as the language and stage décor all help to bring out the main theme.

The plot is so constructed as to project this story of tempestuous class struggle effectively without any fantastic contrivances. The script writer has succeeded in distilling the essence from real life to make the story truly typical. For example, the first half of the action centres mainly on the "dagger returning to its sheath". The white cloth in which the sheath is wrapped recalls the resistance of the older generation of fishermen, while the enemy's attempt to use the dagger to make contact is evidence that the class enemies who have been overthrown are trying to make a come-back. In this way, the past and present struggles are knitted together. The fact that Black Shark the enemy outside has kept the dagger, and Chiu Erh-neng the hidden enemy agent has kept the sheath, shows in a figurative way that there are class enemies both within and without the country, both open and covert. This brings out an important feature of the class struggle in China during the socialist period. Again, this episode about the dagger returning to its sheath uses some conventions from the old Peking opera, but certain innovations make these quite appropriate for depicting feudal despots and pirates in this opera. So it is successful in its critical assimilation of traditional features, in bringing forth something new from the old and making the past serve the needs of the present.

In the depiction of different characters, emphasis is laid on their special characteristics. Of the enemy characters, Black Shark is mulish and rough while Ting Wen-chai is timid and crafty. Both of them want to get a boat to escape, but Black Shark plans to get one by force while Ting prefers to use trickery. Of the revolutionary masses, both Chiao-lien and Hai-ken believe that all is well and have lost their vigilance; but she thinks only of her family life and child, forgetting her gun, while he thinks only of fishing, forgetting class struggle. The different ways in which they reveal their misconceptions make for different solutions of their contradictions. And all these portrayals bring out the main theme more vividly, further enhancing the noble qualities of the chief heroic character.

The opera's language and stage décor have distinctive features too. Following the example of the revolutionary Peking opera *Azalea Mountain*, it has made a fairly successful integration of the language of classical Chinese poetry and modern colloquial speech. The dialogue in Chinese is rhymed; the language is concise with the cadence of music. Again, exaggerated conventional gestures are fairly well integrated with movements from real life which have been made more rhythmical, achieving the effect of beautiful dancing with a national style. The sets are well devised and the movements on the stage are stylized and precise, co-ordinating well with the scenic background. The singing, elocution, acting and acrobatics all reinforce each other and vary in accordance with the development of the plot and of different characters, giving the whole production a satisfying harmony. All these features have enriched and further developed the art of Peking opera.

Boulder Bay is a new flower in the garden of China's socialist art. Its appearance is a new achievement of our revolution in art exemplified by the modern revolutionary Peking operas. It has also been made into a colour film which has been welcomed and acclaimed all over the country.

CHRONICLE

New Chinese Edition of Chairman Mao's Poems Published

To satisfy the demand of the Chinese people the People's Literature Publishing House has put out a new edition of our great leader Chairman Mao's poems. This new collection includes Chairman Mao's two recently published poems — *Reascending Chingkangshan* — to the tune of *Shui Tiao Keh Tou* and *Two Birds: A Dialogue* — to the tune of *Nien Nu Chiao*, as well as the 37 poems published earlier. It will be distributed abroad by Guozi Shudian (China Publications Centre).

National Dance Festival in Peking

A national festival of dance (solo, duet and trio) was held in Peking from January to February this year.

More than 50 dance troupes from various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions as well as army units took part in this festival. They presented over 200 different items in all.

The dances praised Chairman Mao, the Communist Party, the Cultural Revolution and new socialist things, and mirrored China's socialist revolution and construction. A number of the dances were adapted from model revolutionary theatrical works. Others depicted episodes in the history of the Chinese revolution. There were also excellent national minority and folk dances.

This festival will give added impetus to the efforts to implement Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and art. It will

consolidate and develop the gains of the Cultural Revolution and the revolution in literature and art and help to create more and still better dances.

New Chinese Films Shown During Spring Festival

More than 20 new films were shown in various parts of China during the Spring Festival.

Boulder Bay, a colour film, is based on the revolutionary modern Peking opera of the same name that was performed by the Peking Opera Troupe of Shanghai. While faithful to the stage version, the film presents more effectively the heroic image of Lu Chang-hai, leader of a militia company on an off-shore island.

The colour film *Turbulent Mountains* is set in an iron mine in north-east China during the War of Liberation (1946-49). While putting the mine into working order after the liberation of the area, a PLA work team and the miners engage in sharp and complex class struggle and two-line struggle to carry out Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line in industry.

A Memorable Struggle, another feature film in colour set during the War of Liberation, describes the complicated struggle waged against open and hidden class enemies by a PLA work team that goes to the countryside to buy grain for a liberated city.

Spring in the Desert, a full-length colour film, shows how, under Party leadership, herdsmen of Mongolian nationality learn from the national pace-setting Tachai Brigade and transform the desert to create a new pastoral area.

In the feature film *Ab-yung*, a Little Red Soldier and his friends work with a production team during their summer vacation and struggle against a landlord who is trying to sabotage the team's work.

The other colour films include the documentary *We Are Sunflowers* and *The Main Lesson*, an animated cartoon that shows poor and lower-middle peasants educating school graduates in the storm of class struggle.

Theatrical Performances over Spring Festival

During the Spring Festival this year the literary and art workers in Peking, Shanghai, Tientsin and other cities put on a number of model revolutionary theatrical works and new revolutionary shows for worker-peasant-soldier audiences. These works extol Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, the Cultural Revolution and new socialist things, and show the great achievements of the proletarian revolution in literature and art as exemplified by the modern revolutionary theatrical works.

Most programmes featured the model revolutionary theatrical works widely acclaimed by the people. In order to popularize these works, a number of adaptations were staged, including the opera *The White-Haired Girl*, the plays *Fighting on the Plain* and *Sons and Daughters of the Grassland*, and the opera *Azalea Mountain* in Hopei *pangtzu* style.

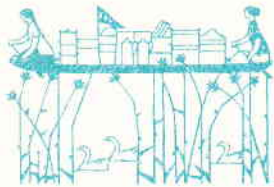
In Peking, experimental productions of two modern revolutionary Peking operas *Crossing the River at Night* and *Children of the Grassland* were given as well as the new modern revolutionary ballet *Azalea Mountain*. Presented for the first time were also the symphonic poem *Liu Hu-lan* and the piano concerto *Battling the Typhoon*. Among the works staged on an experimental basis in Shanghai were the dance dramas *Storm on Miao Mountain* and *Sparkling Red Star*, the Shaohsing operas *Making Our Mountains and Rivers Beautiful* and *Spring Shoots*, and the plays *New Seeds in the Border Area* and *The Bright Road*. In Tientsin the plays *Promising Youth* and *The Long March* and the modern revolutionary Peking opera *Reed Blossom Lake* were shown. In addition, new music, dances, *chuyi* (ballad-singing, story-telling and cross-talk), and acrobatic acts were presented.

During the Spring Festival the literary and art workers of these three cities played to worker-peasant-soldier audiences not only in theatres but also in nearby communes, factories, mines and army units.



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