

PEONY FLOWERS

(牡丹花)

(mǔ dan huā)

Or

THE TALE OF HUĀ HUĀ GŌNGZI AND GŌNG GÒNG QÌ CHĒ

(奇談 花花公子 公共汽車)

(qí tán huā huā gōngzi gōng gòng qì chē)

by

Kē lín

(科林)

Translated by

shǒuyín

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Poem by c dean

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Translators forward:

Kē lín is thy meaning between the words the implied the unsaid the implicit the non read is thy meaning the covert the hidden the silences within the read is one line in fact two sentences is a paragraph but a story in itself do the pauses the gaps between the words tell the true tale symbols metaphors allusion the pointing the hints within must one dive in swim beneath the words take breath between the words oh Kē lín is thy tale but one big allusion or but allusions built on allusions or doth thou take us on a dead end are we but toys in some literary game some scheme of thou to pass some empty hour is all we read is what we get or is what we get up to our discernment our urbanity oh Kē lín thou are a mischievous sprite

¹ The poems referred to in this work can be read in "Chinese Erotic Poems" trans and edited by Tony Barnstone Everyman Library Pocket Poets 2007 and "The Shambhala Anthology of Chinese Poetry" trans and edited by J.P.Seaton Shambhala 2006

PREFACE

In search we seek the strong and the meek

Promiscuity the sign that we seek

Separated from love for a time to long

Promiscuity the sign that the love we long

The slut and the root-rat each to each is love

they seek

To meet their mate their kindred soul

Is the promiscuous sole resolve

We fuck around in search of the love we have

not found

The slut and the root-rat each to each is love

they seek

The wind blew in Tiananmen Square sending leaves into whirls and whorls all through the square people scurried and rushed like the leaves which blew scattered scurrying pushed by the wind into vortexes and swirls maelstroms did twirl random running leaves and people blowing here and there into a nook two blew on benches they sat huā huā gōngzi sat opposite gōng gòng qì chē a tight blouse and mini skirt she did ware with book in hand up her skirt at her white panties he did stare sheer and tight it did bulge and out its sides was dark-black hair “thy fingers are like shoots of new grass”² he did say she did say “my royal chamber is on fire”³ he did say “I hope thy parents are not to close”⁴ to which she did say “will thou come with me”⁵ and he did say “how about one more go”⁶ “come” she did say and “I will give thee peonies⁷ as a gift”⁸ as to her lips she touches her little finger⁹ “ah thou ravishing beauty like a

² Here huā huā gōngzi is alluding to the poem Shuoren (“Portrait of a Bride”) in the “Book of Songs”

³ Here gōng gòng qì chē is alluding to the poem “The Riverbank” in the “Book of Songs”

⁴ Here huā huā gōngzi is alluding to the last line of “The Riverbank” in the “Book of Songs” in the “Book of Songs”

⁵ Here gōng gòng qì chē is alluding to the poem “Zhen and Wei Rivers” in the “Book of Songs”

⁶ Here huā huā gōngzi is alluding to poem “Zhen and Wei Rivers” in the “Book of Songs”

⁷ On the erotic c level peony flowers are symbols of female genitalia

⁸ Here gōng gòng qì chē is alluding to the poem “Zhen and Wei Rivers” in the “Book of Songs”

⁹ In meiren (美人) paintings a women touching her little finger to her lips is a gesture used commonly to suggest erotic arousal

portrait of a lady thy book and finger tip look” he did say “oh” she
did say “I to sit on a rustic seat”¹⁰

To gōng gòng qì chē residence they did arrive
O'er the door huā huā gōngzi did see inscribe

“ The door of birth also brings death
How many men know this when they surge with randy breath
When at night thee use thy jade stalk
Be warned thou can choose a long life or thou can spend”¹¹

After which by and by huā huā gōngzi said
“Oh shut to the light does seem a fairy palace a shuttered door but
bright and airy”¹²

¹⁰ Here huā huā gōngzi and gōng gòng qì chē allude to a painting by Leng Mei, called “Portrait of a Lady”, a hanging scroll painting China Qing dynasty, 18th century AD

This painting is known as a *meiren hua* ('painting of a beauty'), in a tradition dating back to the Tang Dynasty (618-906) in the paintings of Zhou Fang (about 730-800). The lady sits on a rustic seat holding a book in her hand. The informality of her pose, her refined appearance and her diaphanous clothing suggest that Leng Mei may have been depicting a courtesan. The artist's skill can be seen in the delicate rendering of the textile design and the fluid lines of the drapery.
http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/asia/l/leng_mei_portrait_of_a_lady.aspx

¹¹ The lines were commonly written on Beijing brothel walls. The message is Daoist in that they believed long life came from withholding ones semen during sex. To ejaculate was to loose ones vital force and drain one of life spirit which reduced ones life span. In other words the Daoist believed that a mans orgasm spends his vital forces and reduces his life. The term “spend” is a somewhat now forgotten English idiom which carries the connotation of of being spent of vital force

And her reply “what country have thee arrived from
 Hast thou traveled far to my place¹²
 Enter in and all delights to thee I will place”
 Through the halls were pined newspaper pictures on the walls
 Butterflies and peonies with soft sheens
 Green-painted walls “Green tower”¹⁴ he calls
 Frayed mats o’er the floor spread
 A holey quilt lay across a ramshackle bed
 Musty smells hovered in the air as around the room in cracked tea
 cups were withered peonies red
 She offered wine and brought out a lute
 And a song she did sing with plaintive pine
 “Oh in solitude vast emptiness no one who cares for me all careless”¹⁵

¹² Here *huā huā gōngzi* is alluding to a poem by Sima Xiangru (179-117 BCE) called “Prose-Poem of the Beautiful Person”

¹³ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the same poem as *huā huā gōngzi* by Sima Xiangru (179-117 BCE) called “Prose-Poem of the Beautiful Person”

¹⁴ Here *huā huā gōngzi* is alluding “Green towers” which were places where women entertained men they ran from simple brothels to very expensive refined sophisticated places of leisure frequented by the upper classes. In these Green towers the walls were painted green –thus their name

¹⁵ Again *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the same poem as *huā huā gōngzi* by Sima Xiangru (179-117 BCE) called “Prose-Poem of the Beautiful Person” by making reference to a song in said poem

Oh flower flower prince art thou my handsome prince my mate my
 love sent from the gods above
 Oh flower flower prince do I find in thee he to merge with my mind
 He to merge with my mind my soul my everything oh how sublime
 How long the days the many interrupted delays
 Atlas myriad duds along the way
 My flower complexion fades
 Look at all the peoples that have lost their way
 My hair whitens with fear my heart throbs¹⁶ lost I say
 To end up naught but chewed up sugar cane oh the lingering
 pain¹⁷
 Oh my "portrait of a lady" love alludes me to
 To find the one to not be one but two
 Sadness follows me to long my hair a thousand yards long¹⁸
 Like a bird among the clouds no trace will I leave¹⁹ in any heart or
 song

¹⁶ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Han Shan (late 8th-early 9th century called "A flock of Beauties"

¹⁷ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Han Shan (late 8th-early 9th century called "Behind Pearl Curtains"

¹⁸ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to a poem by Li Po called "At Ch'iu-pu Lake"

¹⁹ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to a poem by Li Po called "Ballad of the Voyager"

Among lakes and rivers debauched wandering

Loveless withered up art I²⁰ with no one wondering

Oh flower flower prince thy bright mirror has no frost²¹

In thy far wanderings on heavens winds²² thou are not lost

Oh flower flower prince tears will not crisscross my rouge²³ alleviate

all thy fears

This “plain girl”²⁴ shall warm thee back to life

To float my melons and thy plums ripe to sink in pleasures rife²⁵

Oh my “portrait of a lady” in thee I have found my Lady Xie²⁶

In our far wanderings on heavens winds the winds blew us to we

Blown by the heavenly winds gold wind and jade dew²⁷ have met

²⁰ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to a poem by Wu Weiye (1609-1672) called “On Meeting and Old Flame To the Tune of “Immortal By The River”

²¹ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is replying to *huā huā gōngzǐ* alluding the poem by Li Po called “At Ch’iu-pu Lake”

²² Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is replying to *huā huā gōngzǐ* alluding the poem by Li Po called “Ballad of the Voyager”

²³ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is replying to *huā huā gōngzǐ* alluding the poem by Wu Weiye (1609-1672) called “On Meeting and Old Flame To the Tune of “Immortal By The River”

²⁴ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is refereeing to the goddess T’ien-lao who instructed the yellow emperor in the art of sexual intercourse

²⁵ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to a poem by Lady Tzu-ye (5th century) called “Summer” Lady Tzu-ye name is attached to a set of poems which are clearly anonymous folk tales She is credited with bring sexual love matter back into poetry not seen since the Shih Ching or “Book of Songs”

²⁶ Lady Xie is Xie Daowen the wife of Wang Ni who was consider a great literary talent so the allusion to her implies *gōng gòng qì chē* is learned and talented

²⁷ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to a poem by Qin Quan (1049-1100) called “To The Tune of Magpie Bridge” specifically “gold wind” is symbol of a man and “jade dew” a symbol of a women

Oh flower flower prince no bird built bridge need we for us to see

Our love more ecstatic than most humans feel

Tender love as soft water does feel

No short dream all is real

Our love no separation can our love ever steal²⁸

My "portrait of a lady" like green jade don't brood o'er thy course

background

Thou art a fairy from my own hometown²⁹ which captures my soul

from which love doth sound

Flower flower prince imprisoned in the courtyard of Pengali³⁰

Sleeping days go by hair tossed on pillows shining

I have been shut up with no soul for mine to see³¹

My "portrait of a lady" from thy daytime dreams I will surprise

thee

I enter thy room passed folded screen³²

The is about a mythical story "The Cowherd and the waver Girl" The weaver Girl was a granddaughter of the Emperor of Heaven whose job was to weave cloud embroidery but after her marriage to the Cowherd she stopped working. The Emperor of Heaven was not happy about this and had them separated by the Milky Way. Each year they could only reunite once on the 7th day of the 7th month by crossing the Celestial River (the Milky Way) on a bridge built by magpies

²⁸ Here again *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Qin Quan (1049-1100) called "To The Tune of Magpie Bridge"

²⁹ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to a poem by Su Manshu (1884-1918) called from 10 Narrative poems

³⁰ Pengali is an island of Daoist immortals in Chinese mythology

³¹ Here again *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Li Yu (936-978) called "To The Tune of "Bodhisattva Barbarian""

We gaze at each other our love on fire³³

The room bursts into bloom

Red peonies³⁴ flower speckled with dew³⁵ perfumed scents exotic

waft through out the room

Burst into bloom cracked tea cups into Ming vases turn

Matted mats morph into silk knotted carpets

Paper prints into silk hanging scrolls

Painted screens inlaid with jade and rosewood overlay

³² Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is similarly alluding to the poem by Li Yu (936-978) called "To The Tune of "Bodhisattva Barbarian""

³³ Here it is ambiguous who is speaking –perhaps both – alluding from the poem by Li Yu (936-978) called "To The Tune of "Bodhisattva Barbarian""

³⁴ 牡丹” mudan” The peony has multiple symbolisms it can symbolize love as well as lust and the female genitalia. A peony represents wealth and honor. They also embody romance and love. In China youths and maidens exchange peonies as love symbols. Red has long been regarded as a life-giving colour so red peonies are admired and highly valued.

The peony is often considered a metaphor for female beauty. Some feng shui masters do not recommend having the image of a flowering peony in an older couple's bedroom in order to prevent affairs with younger women. The flower represents the essence of the female element, 'The plant name, "mudan", means 'male vermilion,' "Just look at a tree peony and sometime, see the dark red flower stalks are swelling with buds.

Known as the "king of the flowers," the tree peony has long been a symbol of erotic love, embodying both the female and male elements, the yin and the yang. Since the fourth century, when Xie Lingyun, a poet, described one blooming in the wild, they have found their way into Chinese poetry, ceramics and paintings. Emperors grew them in their palace gardens as early as the sixth century, and they have long been associated with wealth and nobility.

Esteemed as one of the most exquisite flowers, the peony is a symbol for nobility and value. The peony became popular in the imperial palaces during the Sui and Tang dynasties, and earned the title of the "king of flowers." A symbol of spring, it is also used as a metaphor for female beauty and reproduction. Pictured in full bloom, the peony symbolizes peace.

³⁵ On an erotic level peony flowers are symbols of female genitalia and when the dew which represents semen falls on it the peony flower opens

Ragged quilt forms to embroidered silk mandarin-duck pillows o'er
the golden bed spread

Rich screens and tapestries with myriad colored silken butterflies
and peonies blood red

Incense burners curiously curved

From which the smoky scent in the air curled

As around the bed from each four legs and o'er yellow silken canopy
red peonies in profusion burst into intoxicating bloom luminous
colors and silky petals

On lacquered stand single dew speckled red peony floats on light
in light blue porcelain cup

Silky petals surrounding swelling golden stamens burst up

Frothing golden light into the room

Thousand gold frozen lights rain down

Cascading showers of light splattering around

Thousands of fire-flies suspended in motion

Time suspended

Stilled earths rotation

All quite and stilled in loves emotion

The wind and the moon³⁶ is in the air tonight
 I will serve to thee a Bento box³⁷ she sighed
 I won't work my chopsticks to much³⁸ he replied
 He he said she
 On my lute my jade fingers will strum the strings³⁹
 From he and I will erotic songs to thee sing⁴⁰
 He he said she
 While I stand with unpainted eyes before my window⁴¹
 Said he
 Don't let the spring wind open thy skirt
 Thy skirt sash is untied all night show⁴²
 Ha ha said he chortling with glee was she

³⁶ “Wind and moon” can be symbols for a love affair

³⁷ A “Bento box” is a tray of many small dishes and appetizers common in Japanese cuisine but originating in China

³⁸ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to alluding to an anonymous poem called “The Bento Box”

³⁹ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Zi Ye (3rd – 4th century CE) called “Her Shyness”

⁴⁰ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* replies with a line from the poem *gōng gòng qì chē* alluded to ie the poem by Zi Ye (3rd – 4th century CE) called “Her Shyness” here the implication is that *gōng gòng qì chē* fancies *huā huā gōngzǐ* as the first line of the poem goes

I feel you fancy me and I almost approach you

-this indicates the subtleties the allusions to poems in the work can take ie a story taking place between the words and under the text

⁴¹ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Zi Ye (3rd – 4th century CE) called “The Untied Skirt”

⁴² Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* replies with a line from the poem *gōng gòng qì chē* alluded to ie the poem by Zi Ye (3rd – 4th century CE) “The Untied Skirt”

Thou might see a red peony open for thee
 I hear thy panting as orchid scents swell⁴³
 Oh my "portrait of a lady" let us drink wine now that we meet
 And sing of our happiness sweet
 Through thy garment I glimpse thy peony
 I am no heartless man not for a moment nor eternity⁴⁴
 He he said she
 I am weighed down by its sticky substance
 With thoughts unending of love⁴⁵
 Oh said he to she
 My "portrait of a lady" fear not my knife is unpacked and ready
 at that⁴⁶
 Ha ha said he chortling with glee was she
 Merry laughter and mirth came from she and he

⁴³ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Ouyang Jiong (896-971) called "To The Tune of "Washing Gauze in a Stream""

⁴⁴ Here *huā huā gōngzìs* replying with ideas from the poem *gōng gòng qì chē* alluded to by Ouyang Jiong (896-971) called "To The Tune of "Washing Gauze in a Stream"" the implication from the poem is that they will end up sharing *gōng gòng qì chē* golden bed

⁴⁵ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Zhang Wencheng (C 657-730) called "A Poem about his Knife"

⁴⁶ Here *huā huā gōngzìs* replying with ideas from the poem *gōng gòng qì chē* alluded to the poem by Zhang Wencheng (C 657-730) called "A Poem about his Knife"

Oh flower flower prince I sense clouds and rain⁴⁷ in the air
 I see the oriole strutting and into flowers butterflies plunge
 Touching and caressing them one thousand ways⁴⁸ deep in their lair
 He did say
 Don't worry my jade stem extends anticipating the swelling love
 of years
 I to will whisper clouds and rain in thy ear
 As I hold thee tight and moan my dear⁴⁹
 Ha ha said he chortling with glee was she
 To his tone she did sigh
 As if young again my flower face will redden
 Like dry willows leaves turning new green⁵⁰
 Oh my "portrait of a lady" our lips shall close like pulses melting
 into each other
 Like a cat with a small chick in its mouth will be my slow pull-
 out from thee⁵¹

⁴⁷ Clouds and rain is a standard term for having sex it is derived from a poem by Song Yu about a king having sex with a goddess the Lady of Wu mountain

⁴⁸ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to an anonymous poem called "Butterfly and Flower" (C 1618)

⁴⁹ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* is replying with ideas from the anonymous poem *gōng gòng qì chē* alluded

⁵⁰ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* gain is alluding to an anonymous poem called "Butterfly and Flower" (C 1618)

⁵¹ Here *huā huā gōngzǐ* alluding to an anonymous poem called "A Body Like Snow-White Jade" (C 1618)

So long as thee keeps the moon-beauty busy⁵² said she
 Ha ha said he chortling with glee was she
 Merry laughter and mirth came from she and he
 Peony blooms blood red grew and grew within the room
 Petals like slivers of fire like their desire
 Oh flower flower prince thy moth eyed beauty is expert at playing
 the flute⁵³
 Many a tune on it I can make it sing
 Thy jade-like body cannot stop its soul from undulating
 Oh my "portrait of a lady" on thy flute go slowly oh ever so slowly⁵⁴
 Said she
 We numb to time as it passes may dew drip into the heart of the
 peony⁵⁵
 Said he

⁵² Here *gōng gòng qì chēa* gain is alluding to the anonymous poem *huā huā gōngzǐis* alluded to ie poem called "A Body Like Snow-White Jade" (C 1618)

⁵³ Here *gōng gòng qì chēa* gain is alluding to the anonymous poem called "To the Tune of "West River Moon" (1618)

⁵⁴ Here *huā huā gōngzǐis* replies by alluding to the same poem *gōng gòng qì chēa* gain is alluding to the anonymous poem called "To the Tune of "West River Moon" (1618)

⁵⁵ Here *gōng gòng qì chēa* gain is alluding to the anonymous poem called " from Flower Encampment and Battle Formations to the Tune of Like A Dream signed by "The Host of Peach Blossom Spring" anonymous (Ming Dynasty)

*May all thy joints melt and thou fall into the Kingdom of
Dreams⁵⁶*

*Oh my flower flower prince only thou now can possess my Lotus
pond*

In thy lips play with my flowers pistil

No magic rhinoceros horn for us

Like the bee clings to the flowers stamens⁵⁷

*Have no fear my “portrait of a lady” the cock’s gorgeous crest
will stand all night erect⁵⁸ and give thee no rest*

I will play thy Xiang strings⁵⁹

On the jade pendulum let thy purple Phoenix suck

*No need at other handsome men⁶⁰ to look for the thing they bring
Or to tap the shoulder⁶¹ of some immortal⁶²*

⁵⁶ Here *huā huā gōngzǐs* replies by alluding to the same poem *gōng gòng qì chē* gain is alluding to the anonymous poem called “ from Flower Encampment and Battle Formations to the Tune of Like A Dream signed by “The Host of Peach Blossom Spring” anonymous (Ming Dynasty)

Kingdom of dreams refers to Hua Xu the mythical land that the Yellow Emperor dreamed of visiting where people lived naturally and full of joy. Later Hua Xu was the name given to the god of sleep. This mythical land bears resemblance to the land of Peach Blossom Spring which Tao Qian writes about a Shangri-la mountainous land of Daoist natural that a fisherman finds and can never return to once he leaves

⁵⁷ Here *gōng gòng qì chē* gain is alluding to the poem by Huang E (1498-1569) called To the Tune of “Soaring Clouds”

⁵⁸ Here *huā huā gōngzǐs* replies by alluding to the same poem *gōng gòng qì chē* is alluding to the poem by Huang E (1498-1569) called To the Tune of “Soaring Clouds”

⁵⁹ Xiang strings (harp) according to Chinese sex manuals refers to a pleasure spot one inch into the vagina We would call it the G-spot

⁶⁰ These handsome me are referring to famous handsome men Sao Xi and E Jun

Oh flower flower prince in my jade pool lotus leaves are profuse
 But fear not I will sleep not on my embroidered silk quilt⁶⁵
 Tonight is the night of green spring⁶⁴
 Candles red around our bed spread
 Oh my "portrait of a lady" our love is secretly merged in thoughts
 Of the mating hexagram of the male and female phoenixes
 Oh flower flower prince thy crimson bird do take
 As my jade legs will I lift
 Rub my arse cheeks soft like congealed cream
 Hold my jade stem he doth proclaim
 As thy reddish tongue in my mouth I will suck
 With thy saliva moisten my peony
 up and down around the petals do rub it
 Thrust deep and long for the ecstasy to prolong
 Forward thrust as my flower opens where thy stem doth belong
 Ah says she ah says he

⁶¹ Here *huā huā gōngzǐs* is alluding to a poem by Li Shangyin (813-858) from "The Jade City Sequence"

⁶² Here is referring to the immortal Hong Lia

⁶³ Here *gōng gòng qì chēa* replies to *uā huā gōngzǐs* by alluding to the very poem *uā huā gōngzǐ* is alluding to the poem by Li Shangyin (813-858) from "The Jade City Sequence"

⁶⁴ In the following lines *e gōng gòng qì chēa* and *uā huā gōngzǐs* are alluding to the poem by Bai Xingjian (776-826) called "The Wedding Night" there are allusions are so subtle and complex I will leave it to the readers to enjoy themselves in their discoveries

My mind with thee does join says she

My mind with thee does merge says he

Ying and yang the union be

Ecstasy

Bliss

To my mind the pleasures do rush

Lights bright dizziness delights

Ah says she ah says he

Ohhhhhhhhhhh

Ohhhhhhhhhhh

The minds are not I or thee but we

The mind explodes to white brilliant light

Ahhhhhhhhhh

The orgasmic delight

In the mind a red peony bursts red flames bright

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