

The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter

First version (1958)

Rihaku

Translated from the Chinese by Ezra Pound

Lee Hoiby (1926-2011)

Edition: Martin Skamletz

Stand: 20.2.2021

Allegretto

Musical score for measures 1-4. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in common time (indicated by '5') and the bottom staff is in 5/8 time (indicated by '5/8'). The vocal line begins with a rest followed by eighth notes. The piano accompaniment features eighth-note patterns. The lyrics are: "While my hair was still cut straight a-cross my".

5

Musical score for measures 5-8. The vocal line continues with eighth-note patterns. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support. The lyrics are: "fore-head I played a-bout the front gate, pull-ing".

8

Musical score for measures 8-11. The vocal line begins with a sustained note followed by a fermata. The piano accompaniment features eighth-note patterns. The lyrics are: "flow'rs.". The score then transitions to a new section with a change in key signature.

11

You came by on bam-booo stilts, play-ing

15

horse, you walked a-bout my

18

seat, play-ing with blue plums.

21

And we went on liv - ing in the vill-age of Cho - kan: Two small

25

peo-ple, with-out dis - like or sus - pi-cion.

This measure consists of two staves. The top staff is in common time (indicated by a 'C') and has a treble clef. It contains eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is in common time and has a bass clef. It features sixteenth-note patterns. The music concludes with a fermata over the bass clef staff.

29

At four-teen I mar-ried My Lord you.

This measure continues the two-staff format. The top staff shows eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows sixteenth-note patterns. A dynamic marking 'mf' (mezzo-forte) is placed above the bass clef staff.

33

I ne - ver laughed, be-ing

This measure maintains the two-staff layout. The top staff includes a measure in common time (indicated by a 'C') and one in 8/8 time (indicated by an '8'). The bottom staff includes a measure in common time and one in 8/8 time. A dynamic marking 'p' (piano) is placed above the bass clef staff.

37

bash - ful. Low-er-ing my head, I looked at the

This measure continues with the two-staff format. The top staff shows eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff shows sixteenth-note patterns. A dynamic marking 'legato' is placed below the bass clef staff.

40

wall. Called to a thou - sand times,

I nev - er looked

mf

43

back.

At fift-teen I stopped scowl- ing.

p

pp

47

I de-sired my dust____ to be mingl-ed with yours for - ev - er and for

legato

cresc.

51

ev - er and____ for - ev - - er.

f

p

pedale tenuto

53

Why should I climb the

legato

55 **ritard.** **a tempo**

look - out? At six-teen you de-part - ed.

pp

59

You went in-to far Ku - to - yen, by the riv - er of swirl - ing

f

63 **ritard.**

ed-dies, and you have been gone five

ff

65 **a tempo**

months.

The mon - keys_ make sor-row-ful

68

noise o - ver-head.

You dragged your feet when you went out.

71

By the gate now, the moss is grown,

the

74

ritard.

dif - frent moss - es, too deep to clear them a - way!

77 **a tempo (♩=♪)**

The leaves fall

80

ear - ly this au - tumn, in wind.

83

The paired but - ter - flies are al - read - y

86

yel - low with Aug - ust o - ver the

89

grass in the West

f

92

gar - - den.

dim.

96

They hurt me. I grow old - er.

pp

103 *freely* **meno mosso**

If you are com-ing down through the nar-rows of the riv-er Kiang, please let me

108

know__ be - fore-hand and I will come out__ to meet you as far as

117 , , **Tempo I**

Cho - fu - - sa.

pp

123

duration:
4 min.

Lee Hoiby: *The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter*
First version (1958)

Martin Skamletz: Editionsbericht (Stand: 13.9.2021)

Quelle:¹ Reinschrift **R**
(ohne Berücksichtigung der Abweichungen vom Arbeitsmanuskript **A**)²

rh... Klavier rechte Hand, lh... linke Hand

- T. 2 rh Ergänzung von Staccato-Punkten (vgl. T. 12)
T. 64 rh Ergänzung von Achtelbalken bei den Duolen
(in **R** als Viertel-Duolen notiert)
T. 126 lh Ergänzung des Bassschlüssels

¹ Zu den Quellen s. Martin Skamletz: „I've turned into a great reviser.“ Lee Hoibys Vertonung von Li Bais *The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter* und ihr Bezug zu Harry Partch, in: *Der doppelte Po und die Musik. Rätoromanisch-chinesische Studien, besonders zu Li Po, Harry Partch und Chasper Po*, hg. von Mathias Gredig, Marc Winter, Rico Valär und Roman Brotbeck, Würzburg 2021, S. 371–398, hier S. 373–376.

² Zu den Abweichungen des Arbeitsmanuskripts **A** von der Reinschrift **R** s. ebd., S. 373 (Anm. 15): „Abweichungen in **A** von **R** (wenn nicht anders angegeben, in der Gesangsstimme): T. 5f. Textunterlegung »Played I«; 12 Viertelpause, Viertelnote, Achtelnote; 15 Akzent; 16 g'; 18 e'' g' c'' e''; 24 ohne Portato-Striche; die Takte 28f. fehlen in **A** (sind nur teilweise über dem System skizziert); 38 des'' eine Achtelnote »Low'r-«; zwischen 42 u. 43 ein zusätzlicher Takt; 57f. f' fis' a' (übergebunden) des'' f'; 74 es'' Viertelnote, des'' Achtelnote, dann Pause; 75 des'' Viertelnote nach Viertelpause, des'' punktierte Achtelnote, c'' Sechzehntelnote; 78 f'; 79–81 Viertelnoten g' as' b' | ces'' des'' d'' | b' as' g'; 88 drei Viertelnoten e'' f'' g''; 90 drei Viertelnoten; 92f. fis'' Halbe, eis' Viertel übergebunden auf weitere Viertel in 93, r. H. ab 92/3. Viertelnote: Akkordzerlegungen eis'-cis''-h''-cis'' | e'-cis''-h'-cis' d'-h'-f'-h' d'-h'-e'-h'; 105 »riv-er« zwei Achtelnoten.“