Tang Shi 300 Tang Poems
An anthology of 320 poems. Discover Chinese poetry in its golden age and some of the greatest Chinese poets. Tr. by Byrner (en).

Tangshi I. 1. (33)

韋應物 WEI YINGWU
TO MY DAUGHTER ON HER MARRIAGE INTO THE YANG FAMILY

My heart has been heavy all day long
Because you have so far to go
The marriage of a girl, away from her parents,
Is the launching of a little boat on a great river.
...You were very young when your mother died,
Which made me the more tender of you.
Your elder sister has looked out for you,
And now you are both crying and cannot part.
This makes my grief the harder to bear;
Yet it is right that you should go.
...Having had from childhood no mother to guide you,
How will you honour your mother-in-law?
It's an excellent family; they will be kind to you,
They will forgive you your mistakes—
Although ours has been so pure and poor
That you can take them no great dowry.
Be gentle and respectful, as a woman should be,
Careful of word and look, observant of good example.
...After this morning we separate,
There's no knowing for how long....
I always try to hide my feelings –
They are suddenly too much for me,
When I turn and see my younger daughter
With the tears running down her cheek.

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