a quotation from chairman mao

thousands upon thousands of martyrs have heroically laid down their lives for the people; let us hold their banner high and march ahead along the path crimson with their blood exclamation

080503 -- modern revolutionary peking opera: "the red lantern"

peking, august 5 (hsinhuah) -- hsinhua editor's note: in order to meet the request of readers abroad for the contents of china's model revolutionary theatrical works produced under the guidance of chairman mao's proletarian revolutionary line in literature and art, we released on june 20 of this year the english translation of the modern revolutionary peking opera "taking tiger mountain by strategy" (october, 1969 stage version). following is the full text of the libretto of another modern revolutionary peking opera, "the red lantern" (may, 1970 stage version):

the red lantern

(may 1970 script)

revised collectively by the china peking opera troupe

characters

li yu-ho switchman, member of the communist party of china

li's daughter

li's mother

liaison man liaison man from the pine peak base area of the eighth route army

knife-grinder platoon leader of the guerrillas of the eighth route army in the cypress mountains

hui-luen li's neighbour

hui-luen's mother-in-law

several guerrillas

woman gruel-seller

cigarette girl

hatoyama chief of the japanese gendarmerie

wang lien-chu puppet police, inspector, an underground communist who turns traitor

auxiliary hou auxiliary gendarme of the japanese gendarmerie

sergeant sergeant of the japanese gendarmerie

bogus liaison man spy for the japanese gendarmerie

cobbler spy for the japanese gendarmerie

several japanese gendarmes and spies

scene one

contacting the liaison man

an early winter night during the war of resistance against japan. north china, near the lungtan railway station, the railway embankment is visible. undulating hills loom in the distance.

(as the curtain rises, the north wind is howling. four japanese gendarmes march past on patrol. a signal lantern in his hand, li yu-ho, vigorous and calm, enters with firm steps.)

li (sings "hsi pi san pan" /note/):

red lantern in hand, i look round;

the leadership is sending a man here to lungtan;

the time fixed is half past seven;

the next train should bring him.

(the wind whistles. enter tieh-mei with a basket, heading into the wind.)

tieh-mei: dad exclamation

li: well, tieh-mei exclamation (realizing that she must be cold, he takes off his scarf and wraps it round her neck.) how was business today?

tieh-mei: humph exclamation the gendarmes and their thugs kept searching and pestering everybody. people were too jittery to buy anything.

li: those bandits exclamation

tieh-mei: do be careful, dad.

li: right. go home and tell granny that an uncle is coming.

tieh-mei: an uncle?

li: yes.

tieh-mei: what does this uncle look like, dad?

li: don't ask such questions.

tieh-mei: i'll ask granny then.
such as "hsi pi yuan pan", "hsi pi liu shui", "erh huang kuai san yen", "hsi pi yao pan", "hsi pi erh liu", "erh huang yuan pan", are various styles of singing in peking opera. each has its own fixed tune, structure, mode, rhythm and tempo. modern revolutionary peking opera has critically assimilated various styles of singing from traditional peking opera with many creative improvements to suit the portrayal of proletarian heroes.

scene two

accepting the task

immediately after the last scene. li's house, interior and exterior view. the door opens on to a small lane, a table and several chairs in the middle of the room. a red paper butterfly pasted on the window pane. on the right, towards the rear, an inner room, with a curtain hanging over the doorway.

(as the curtain rises, the north wind is roaring. it's dim in the room. granny turns up the lamp wick and the room becomes brighter.)

granny (sings "hsi pi san pan"): fishermen brave the wind and waves, hunters (switching to "yuan pan") fear neither tigers nor wolves; the darkest night must end at last in the bright blaze of revolution.

(enter tien-mei with a basket.)

granny: tien-mei.

tien-mei: dad told me an uncle is coming soon. (puts down the basket.)

granny (to herself, expectantly): ah, an uncle is coming soon.

exclamation

tien-mei: how is it i have so many uncles, granny?

granny: your father has many cousins, so of course you have many uncles. (mending clothes.)

tien-mei: which one is coming today?

granny: don't ask, you'll know when he comes. tien-mei: even if you won't tell me, granny, i know. granny: do you? what do you know?

tien-mei: granny, just listen (sings "hsi pi liu shui") i've more uncles than i can count; they only come when there's important business.

note: "hsi pi san pan" and other similar terms found in the text,
though we call them relatives, we never met before, yet they are closer to us than our own relatives.
both dad and you call them our own folk;
i can guess part of the reason why:
they’re all like my dad,
men with red, loyal hearts.
(Li hurries in, carrying liaison man on his back, he pushes the door open and walks in, he signs to tien-mei to close the door and keep an eye on the outside, then helps liaison man to a chair and gives him a drink of water.)
Liaison man (recovering): can you tell me if there’s a switchman here named Li?
Li: that’s me.
(Li and liaison man exchange passwords.)
Liaison man: I sell wooden combs.
Li: any made of peach-wood?
Liaison man: yes, for cash down.
Liaison man: fine, wait a minute.
(Li signs to granny to give the lamp test.)
(granny holds up a kerosene lamp and looks at liaison man): neighbour...
Liaison man (realizing the method of identification is wrong): thank you for saving my life. I must go.
Li: holds up the red lantern: comrade exclamation
Liaison man (excitedly): I’ve found you at last! exclamation
(tien-mei takes the red lantern, becomes aware of its significance.)
(granny signs to tien-mei to go out with the basket and keep watch.)
Liaison man: old Li, I’m the liaison man from the pine peak base area. (takes a document out of the sole of his shoe.)
Li: I’ll take it carefully.
Liaison man: get it to the guerrillas in the cypress mountains;
tomorrow afternoon, at the gruel stall in the junk market,
a knife-grinder will contact you. same password as before.
Li: same password as before.
Liaison man: old Li, this is a difficult task exclamation
Li: I guarantee I’ll do it without fail.
Liaison man: fine. but time is pressing, old Li, I must go back at once.
Li: comrade, can you manage?
Liaison man: a moment ago I passed out simply from the fall.
I’m all right now, I can manage.
Li: I’ll wait a minute, you’d better change your clothes.
(helps liaison man change his jacket.)
Li (with great concern): the enemy is searching everywhere.
so things are very tight. be careful on your way back.
Liaison man: I will, old Li.
Li: comrade....

(sings "erh huang kuai san yen")
be on guard as you go --
mountains are high, torrents swift.
follow small lanes and short bridges,
the quiet and safe paths.
to the revolution we offer our loyal hearts.
(sees liaison man off. tien-mei enters.)
(continues to sing)
shouldering the heavy task I’ll stand up to any test in the fire.
bursting with strength, I’ll be worthy of the trust of the party.
no difficulty in the world can daunt a communist.
(the siren of a police car wails. with presence of mind,
Li motions to Granny to blow out the lamp. with the secret code in his hand, Li strikes a dramatic pose.)
(lights fade.)
(curtain)

Scene three

Narrow escape at the gruel stall

The next afternoon. the gruel stall in the junk market.

(as the curtain rises, workmen C is sitting at the counter eating gruel. Workmen A and B walk in and sit down at the gruel counter. cigarette girl sits not far away from the stall. Li enters with his lantern in one hand and lunch box in the other, calm and watchful.)

Li (sings "hsii pi yao pan"): seeking my comrade in the junk market,
i have hidden the code in my lunch box.
no obstacles whatever can stop me,
i must get it to the cypress mountains.
workman C (stands up): old Li exclamation
Li (with concern): ah, old Chang, has your wound healed?
workman C: it’s much better.
Li: watch out for yourself in the future.
workman C: yes. (to himself) what kind of times we live in exclamation
the Japanese devil rides in my rickshaw and won’t pay, and even beats me up. what a world exclamation (exit.)
(Li walks to the gruel stall and hangs the red lantern on a post.)
workmen A and B: hello, old Li, come here and sit with us.
Li (warmly): Let's all sit down.
gruel-seller: a bowl of gruel, old Li, exclamation
Li: yes, please. how is business?
gruel-seller: so-so. (she serves him.)
(enter workman d.)
workman d: a bowl of gruel, please. (takes the bowl, about to eat.) what's this? it's mouldy exclamation
workman a: it's rationed mixed stuff.
gruel-seller: we can do nothing about it.
workman b: hey exclamation (crunches bits of stone, spits them out.) nearly broke my teeth exclamation
workman a: it's full of grit.
workman b: they just don't treat us like human beings.
workman a: hush exclamation don't ask for trouble.
workman b: how can we eat such stuff? we just can't live exclamation.
Li (sharing their feelings, sings "hsii pi liu shui"): so many compatriots are suffering and fuming with discontent, struggling under iron heels they seethe with wrath, spring thunder will rumble when the time comes, the brave chinese people will never bow before the butcher's knife. may our comrades come soon from the cypress mountains exclamation
(enter knife-grinder.)
knife-grinder (sings "hsii pi yao pan"): looking around for my comrade, i see the red lantern hanging high to greet me. i cry: any knives or scissors to grind?
Li (sings "hsii pi yao pan"): the knife-grinder fixes his eyes on my red lantern and he raises his left hand to hail me. through a chat i'll try the password on him. before Li can speak to knife-grinder, a siren wafts and japanese gendarmes charge in. knife-grinder deliberately overturns his banch to draw the enemy's attention.
Li (continues to sing): he draws the wolves to himself in order to cover me. (as he sings he coolly and resourcefully empties his gruel into the lunch box.)
Li: another helping, please.
(Li lets gruel-seller fill his lunch box.) (the gendarmes finish searching knife-grinder, angrily wave him away and turn towards Li.)
(Li deliberately holds out his lunch box for search, the japanese push the smellly gruel away, after searching him they gesture for him to go.)
(Li picks up his lunch box and lantern, and breaks into a serene smile. having fooled the enemy, he walks calmly to the centre of the stage. then he turns round and, head high, strides off victoriously. (lights fade.)
(curtain)
scene four
wang turns traitor.

afternoon. hatoyama's office.

(as the curtain rises, hatoyama is talking on the telephone.)

hatoyama: oh, oh exclamation... what, the trail lost?... eh, don't worry. i promise to get the code. the case must be cleared up before the deadline exclamation yes, yes, sir exclamation (puts down the receiver and speaks to himself.) the communists are really sharp exclamation just when the headquarters gets on their trail, they shake us off. they're hard nuts to crack, those communists exclamation (sergeant and hou enter.)

sergeant: reporting exclamation we searched everywhere, but found no trace of the man who jumped off the train. we've arrested a few suspects.

hatoyama: what's the use of suspects? this fellow from the train is a liaison man of the communists. he has a very important secret code with him. if it reaches the guerrillas in the cypress mountains, it will spell big trouble for our empire.

sergeant: yes, sir.

hatoyama: where is inspector wang?

hou: he's here.

hatoyama: bring him in.

hou: yes, sir. (calling to the inside.) inspector wang. (center wang with a wounded arm in a sling.)

(wang exits.)

wong: captain. (salutes.)

hatoyama: ah, brave young fellow, you've been working hard exclamation on behalf of the headquarters, i present you this medal, third class. (pins the medal on wang's chest.)

wong: thank you, captain.

hatoyama (sings "hsii pi san pan"): if you serve the empire loyally you have every chance to rise high; as the saying goes: the bitter sea has no bounds, repent and the shore is at hand. now everything depends on whether you are sensible.
scene five

recounting the family's revolutionary history

dusk. li's house, interior and exterior view.

(as the curtain rises, granny is waiting anxiously for li.)

(granny sings "hsi pi yao pan"): it's dusk, but my son still hasn't come back.
(tieh-mei walks out of the inner room. a police siren wails.)

(tieh-mei continues the singing):
there's such commotion in the streets, i'm worried about dad.
(lunch box and red lantern in hand, li enters and knocks at the door.)

li: tieh-mei.

tieh-mei: dad is back exclamation

(granny: open the door, quick.)

(granny opens the door): dad exclamation

(granny: yu-ho.)

li: mother exclamation

(granny: you're back, at last. have you got in touch with him?)
(takes the red lantern and lunch box from him.)

(li: not yet. (throws off his overcoat.)

(granny: anything wrong?)

li: mother exclamation

(sings "hsi pi liu shui"): i was trying to contact the knife-grinder at the gruel stall
when a police car came and the japanese started a search, to protect me the knife-grinder drew away the wolves, seizing the chance i concealed the code in the lunch box, they didn't find the code hidden under the gruel.

(tieh-mei: how good uncle knife-grinder is exclamation

(granny: where is the code, yu-ho?)

li: mother exclamation

(continues to sing in an affectionate and low voice)

i've put it in a safe place to guard against any accident.

(tieh-mei: you're resourceful, dad.

(li: you know everything now, tieh-mei. the code is more important than our lives. we must keep it a secret even if it costs us our heads. understand?)

(tieh-mei: yes.

(li: han, so you understand exclamation what a smart daughter i've got exclamation

(tieh-mei: dad....

li: ho exclamation ...

(it is getting dark. granny brings a kerosene lamp.)
granny: just look at you father and daughter....
Li: i've got something to do, mother, i must go out again.
granny: be careful exclamation and don't be too late.
Li: i won't.
tieh-mei: take this, dad. (she wraps the scarf round his neck.)
do come back early.
Li (affectionately): i will. (walks out of the door. exit.)
(granny closes the door.)
(granny polishes the red lantern with loving care. tieh-
mei watches attentively.)
granny: come here, tieh-mei. i'll tell you the story of
the red lantern.
tieh-mei: fine. (nappily walks over to the table and sits
down beside it.)
granny (seriously): for many years this lantern has lighted the
way for us poor people, for us workers. your grandfather
used to carry this lantern, and now your dad carries it, you
saw what happened last night, child. we can't do without it
at crucial moments. remember, this red lantern is our
family treasure.
tieh-mei: our family treasure?
(Looking at tieh-mei confidently, granny goes into the inner room.)
(tieh-mei picks up the lantern, examines it and falls
in deep thought.)
tieh-mei (sings "hsii pi san pan"):
granny has told me the story of the red lantern,
the words are few, but meaning is deep.
why are my father and uncle (switches to "yuan pan")
not afraid of danger?
because they want to save china,
save the poor, defeat the japanese invaders.
i realize i should act as they do,
and be a person like them.
i am seventeen, no longer a child,
should share my father's worries.
if he's carrying a thousand-pound load,
should carry eight hundred.
(granny comes out.)
granny: tieh-mei, tieh-mei exclamation
.tieh-mei: tieh-mei exclamation
granny: what are you thinking about?
tieh-mei: nothing.
(a child cries next door.)
granny: isn't that lung-erh crying?
tieh-mei: yes.
granny: their grain has run out again exclamation we have
some corn meal left, give it to them.
tieh-mei: all right. (gets it.)
(hui-lien enters, knocks at the door.)
hui-lien: granny li exclamation
tieh-mei: it's sister hui-lien.
News from Hsinhua News Agency

Everything to deliver it to the knife-grinder, the password is the same.

Granny: the password is the same.

Li: yes, but you must be careful.

Granny: I know, don't worry.

Tien-mei: Dad...

(Hoai enters, knocks at the door.)

Hoai: Is master Li in?

Li: They've come, mother.

Tien-mei: Dad, you...

Li: Open the door, tien-mei.

Tien-mei: Yes.

Hoai: Open the door exclamation.

(Tien-mei tears off the red paper butterfly while she opens the door.)

Hoai: (Entering the house): Are you master Li?

Li: Yes.

Hoai: Captain Hatoyama invites you to have a drink. (Presents an invitation card.)

Li: So captain Hatoyama invites me to a feast?

Hoai: Yes.

Li: Hoai exclamation: what an honour exclamation (throws the invitation card on the table scornfully.)

Hoai: He just wants to make friends with you. Come along, please, master Li.

Li: After you. (To Granny, firmly and gravely.) Mother, take good care of yourself. I'm going.

Granny: Wait a minute exclamation. Tien-mei, bring some wine.

Tien-mei: Yes. (Fetches some wine.)

Hoai: Don't bother, ma'am. There's plenty at the feast for him to drink.

Granny: Ban exclamation... the poor prefer their own wine. Each drop of it warms the heart. (Takes the bowl of wine from Tien-mei and, gravely, and with deep feeling, she bids Li a hero's farewell.) Son, take this bowl and drink it exclamation.

Li: (Taking the bowl solemnly): With this wine to put heart into me, mother, I can cope with whatever wine they give me. (Drains the bowl at one gulp.) Thank you, mother.

(Charscically, sings "Lai pi erh Liu")

I drink the wine mother gives me at parting, I'm filled with courage and strength. Hatoyama is giving a feast to make "friends" with me, even a thousand cups I can handle. The weather is treacherous, with sudden wind and snow, be prepared always for unexpected changes.

Tien-mei: Dad. (Crushes over to Li, sobbing.)

Li: (Kindly and meaningfully, continues singing):

Dear Tien-mei,

When you are out selling wares, keep an eye on the weather...
and remember well all the "accounts."

beware of curs lurking outside

when you feel drowsy;

listen for the magpie's lucky song

when you feel low.

you must run errands for the family

and share your granny's burdens and cares.

tien-mei: dad exclusion (claps him and sobs.)

hoo: let's go, master li.

li: don't cry, child. always do as granny says.

tien-mei: i will.

granny: open the door, tien-mei, so your father can go to the

"feast."

li: i'm going now, mother.

(li and granny clasp each other's hands firmly, encouraging

each other to be staunch in the fight.)

(tien-mei opens the door, a gust of wind. li strides out

into the wind, head high, hoo follows.)

(tien-mei runs after li with the scarf, crying: "dad exclusion"

spies, a, b and c rush in and bar her way.)

spy a: stop exclusion go back.

(he forces tien-mei back, the spies come into the room.)

spy a: make a search exclusion stay where you are exclusion

(they rummage the house, one of them comes out of the inner

room with an almanac, leaves through it, then tosses it away.)

spy a: let's go.

(they go off.)

(tien-mei closes the door, draws the curtain and looks around

the room):

granny exclusion (falls into granny's arms and sobs. a pause.)

will dad ever come back, granny?

granny: your dad....

tien-mei: dad....

granny: tien-mei, tears cannot save your dad. don't cry now.

it's time to tell you everything about our family.

tien-mei: what, granny?

granny: sit down. i'll tell you.

(granny looks at the scarf. revolutionary memories float

before her eyes; hatred, old and new, for the enemy comes

to her mind.)

(tien-mei gets a stool and sits down beside her.)

granny: tell me, child, is your dad a good man?

tien-mei: of course.

granny: but...he's not your own father.

tien-mei (startled): an exclusion what are you saying, granny?

granny: neither am i your granny.

tien-mei: granny, granny, granny exclusion are you out of your mind?

granny: no, child. we three generations are not from the same

family. (stands up.) your surname is chen, mine is li

and your dad's is chang.

(sings "erh huang san pan")

for seventeen storm-tossed years i've kept quiet,

several times i wanted to speak,

but i was afraid you were too young for the truth.

granny (sings "erh huang man san yen"): it's most likely your father will not return,

and granny may be jailed too.

then the heavy burden of revolution will fall on you.

when i tell you the truth, tien-mei,

can you break down, be brave and staunch,

learn from your father his loyalty, courage, and iron will.

tien-mei: granny, sit down and tell me everything. (helps

granny to a seat.)

granny: it's a long story. your grandfather was a maintenance

man in the klangon locomotive depot near hankow. he had

two apprentices, one was your own father, chen chih-

hsing.

granny: my father, chen chih-hsing?

granny: the other was your present dad, chang yu-ho.

(granny: at that time, the country was torn by strife among war-

lords. then, chairman mao and the communist party led

the chinese people in waging revolution. in february 1923,

workers of the peking-hankow railway set up a federation

of trade unions in chengchow. one of the warlords, wu pei-

fu, a stooge of the foreign invaders, tried to ban it. at

the call of the federation, all the workers on the line

went on strike. more than ten thousand in klangon took to

the street and demonstrated, that was another cold, dark

night. i was so worried about your grandfather i couldn't

sit still or go to sleep. i was mourning clothes by the

lamp when i heard someone knocking at the door, calling,

" aunty, aunty, quick, open the door." i did, and in rushed

a man.

tien-mei: who was it?

granny: your dad.

granny: my dad?

granny: yes, your present dad. he was covered with wounds,

and in his left hand he held this very signal lantern....

granny: the signal lantern?

granny: in his right arm he held a baby.

granny: a baby....

granny: a baby less than one year old.

granny: that baby....

granny: than who?

granny: than you.

granny: me?

granny: hugging you tightly to his chest, with tears in his
eyes your dad stood before me and shouted, "aunty, aunty...."
for several minutes he just stared at me and couldn't
go on, terribly worried, i urged him to speak. he...
"my master and brother chen... have been murdered.
this is chen's child, a future successor to the revolution.
now, your master and brother chen... have been murdered.
the add, "aunty, from now on i am your own son and this
child is your own grand-daughter." then i took you
and held you tight in my arms.
tien-mei: granny exclamation (buries her head in granny's
arms.)
granny: be brave and listen.
(sings "ehr huang yuan pan")
in the strike those devils murdered your father and mother,
li yu-ho worked untiringly for the revolution;
he swore to follow in the martyrs' steps, to keep
the red lantern burning;
he staunched his wounds, buried the dead and went
on with the fight.
now the japanese brigands are burning, killing and looting,
before our eyes your dad was taken away to prison;
remember this debt of blood and tears,
be brave and determined to settle accounts with the enemy,
a debt of blood must be paid with blood.
tien-mei (sings "ehr huang yuan pan"): granny tells a heroic and stirring episode of the revolution,
now i know i was raised in wind and rain.
dear granny, for all those seventeen years,
your kindness to me has been vast as the sea.
now with high aims i see my way clear.
blood must pay for our blood,
successors must carry forward the cause of our martyrs.
here i raise the red lantern, let its light shine far.
dad exclamation (changes to "ehr huang kual pan")
my father is as steadfast as the pine,
a communist who fears nothing under the sun.
following in your footsteps i shall never waver.
the red lantern we hold high, and it shines
on my father fighting those wild beasts.
generation after generation we shall fight on,
never leaving the field until all the wolves are killed.
tien-mei and granny hold high the red lantern in a
dramatic pose, it casts a radiant red light.
(lights fade.)
(curtain)

scene six

struggling against hatoyama at the feast

immediately after the previous scene. hatoyama's reception room.
a feast is laid.

(as the curtain rises, hou enters.)

hou: please come in, master li.
(li enters calmly and with firm steps. exit hou.)

li: (sings "ehr huang yuan pan");
a poisoned arrow is hidden in the invitation card,
sudden burst of a storm means traitors lurking,
i laugh at his feast spread amid swords and axes,
with revolutionary righteousness in my heart,
will face the enemy with composure, firm as a mountain.
enter hatoyama.

hatoyama: ah, my old friend. i trust you've been well?
li: ah, mr. hatoyama, how are you?
(li ignores hatoyama's extended hand, hatoyama withdraws
it in embarrassment.)

hatoyama: so we meet again after all this time, eh? do you
remember i once treated you in the railway hospital?
li: in those days you were a rich japanese doctor and i was
a poor chinese worker, we were like two trains running
don different tracks, travelling in different directions.
hatoyama: no matter how you put it, we're not strangers, right?
li (pretending a civility): then i'll expect you to be "helpful."
hatoyama: that's why i've invited you for a good chat.
please sit down. this is a private feast, old friend,
we'll talk of friendship and nothing else, all right?

li (sounding the enemy out coolly): i am a poor worker and
like to be straightforward. anything you have in mind,
just speak out.

hatoyama: quite frank exclamation come on, old friend,
drink up.
li: it's very kind of you, mr. hatoyama. sorry, i don't drink.
(pushes the cup away, takes out his pipe and lights it.)
hatoyama: you don't drink? there's an old chinese saying,"life is but a dream," it passes in a flash. therefore,
as is well said, "enjoy wine and song while we can, for
tomorrow we die."
li (blowing out his match contemptuously): yes, listening to
songs and drinking the best wine is the life of an
immortal. i hope you always lead such a life and i wish
you "long life," mr. hatoyama. (throws away the match
sarcastically.)

hatoyama: hah... (forcing a smile.) old friend, i am a
believer in buddhism. a buddhist sutra tells us, "the
bitter sea has no bounds, repent and the shore is at
hand."
you swore you would gladly die for the revolution; how could you sell out and be their pawn? they are treating you like a cur, yet you count disgrace an honour, the day will come when the people bring you to trial, your betrayal is an unpardonable crime.

(terrified by Li's revolutionary integrity, the traitor hides behind hatoyama.)

hatoyama (quite pleased with himself): keep cool, my friend. ah... (waves wang away.) i didn't want to play my trump card but you forced me to. i had no alternative.

li (in sharp retort): i expected as much. your trump card is nothing but a mangy dog with a broken back. you'll get no satisfaction out of me, hatoyama.

hatoyama (frustrated, reveals his true colours): you know very well what my job is, li yu-ho. i'm the one who issues sentences to hell.

li (giving tit for tat): and you know very well what my job is. i'm the one who will demolish your hell. hatoyama: you ought to know my torture instruments are hungry for human flesh.

li (contemptuously): i am no stranger to those gadgets of yours. hatoyama (menacing): take my advice and recant before your bones are broken.

li (overwhelming the enemy): i'd sooner have my bones broken than recant.

hatoyama: our gendarmes are pitiless. once in the torture chamber you won't come out alive.

li (categorically): we communists have a will of steel. we look on death as nothing, exclamation hatoyama exclamation (denouncing the japanese bandits, sings "hsi pi yuan pan") the japanese militarists are wolves hiding their savagery behind a smile, you kill our people and invade our land (switches to "kuai pan") in the name of "co-prosperity in east asia," the communist party and chairman mao are leading the people's revolution; we have hundreds of millions of heroes fighting against japan to save our country, your reliance on traitors is of no more use than fishing for the moon in the lake.

hatoyama: sergeant exclamation

(sergeant and two gendarmes enter.)

hatoyama (sings "hsi pi san pan"): i'll let you taste all of my torture instruments.

(militantly, li throws open his coat in a dramatic pose.)

li (smiles sardonically): hah exclamation...

sergeant: get moving.

li (sings "hsi pi san pan"): you can only limber up my joints. sergeant: take him away.
News from Hsinhua News Agency

Li: I don't need your help.
(Li flings out his arms and they stagger backwards.)
(Calmly, Li buttons his coat, picks up his cap, flicks the dust off it and holds it behind his back. Turning round, he strides off in a manner that overwhels the enemy.)
(Sergeant and gendarmes follow.)

Hatoyama (crestfallen and helpless): He's a hard one, an exclamation recites "Pu teng ngo" /note 2/

What makes a communist tougher than steel?
My persuasion and threats are of no avail,
I hope torture will make him speak.

(Enter sergeant.)

Sergeant: Reporting, exclamation Li Yu-ho would rather die than speak.

Hatoyama: Rather die than speak?

Sergeant: Let me take some men to search his house again, Captain.

Hatoyama: Forget it. Communists are very vigilant. He must have put the code somewhere else.

Sergeant: Yes, sir.

Hatoyama: Bring him in.

Sergeant: Bring Li Yu-ho here, exclamation (two Japanese gendarmes drag Li in. Blood-stained and covered with wounds, Li advances militantly on Hatoyama, then, turning round in a dance movement, he stands erect, supporting himself on a chair.)

Li (sings "Hei pi too pan"): You beast with the heart of a wolf, exclamation Hatoyama: The code. Give me the code.

Li: Hatoyama exclamation
(Continues to sing, switching to "Hei pi kuai pan")
No matter how cruel your tortures,
No matter how many I'll never bow my head, exclamation Ha...
(The enemies are terrified by his heroic spirit.)
(Li strikes a dramatic pose.)
(Lights fade.)

(Curtain)

Note 1: Here "law" means the reactionary class while "outlaws" means the revolutionary spirit of rebellion of the proletariat and revolutionary people in their struggle against the reactionaries. In striking back against Hatoyama, Li Yu-ho uses this saying to imply that the Japanese bandits may ride roughshod for a time, but it is the revolutionary people who are really strong. The Japanese bandits are doomed. The Chinese people are sure to win.

Note 2: A recitative accompanied rhythmically by percussion instruments.

Scene Seven

Help from the masses

One morning several days later. Li's house, interior and exterior view.

(As the curtain rises, cobbler, a spy in disguise, is sitting not far from the door watching the house.)

Knife-grinder cries offstage: "Any knives or scissors to grind?" He enters repeating his cry while warily looking around. He sees that the red paper butterfly on the window pane is gone and notices the spy. He decides to make contact some other time.

Granny and Tien-Wei come out of the inner room and look out of the window.

Knife-grinder leaves, calmly uttering his cry. The spy looks at him but sees nothing unusual.

Granny: That knife-grinder probably came to contact us, Tien-Wei.

Tien-Wei: I'll run after him with the lantern and see whether he's our man or not.

Granny: It won't do, child, not with that dog outside.

You can't go.

Tien-Wei: Then, what shall we do? (Meditating.) Granny, I have an idea. I'll go out through Hui-lien's house.

Granny: How can you do that, my child?

Tien-Wei: The other day, in the inner room where our bed stands the stone at the foot of the wall came loose. When I was helping Dad repair the wall I pulled it out and crawled through for a visit.

Granny: What, you crawled through?

Tien-Wei: Yes, Hui-lien's room is right on the other side.

Granny: Let's ask their help, then. You can go out through their house. Do you remember the password your Dad told you, Tien-Wei?

Tien-Wei: Yes, I do.

Granny: If you catch up with the knife-grinder, and he gives the right password in reply, go to the west bank of the river and get the code from under the stone-tablet beside an old Locust tree.
tien-mei: under the stone-tablet by an old peacock tree?
granny: didn't you hear your dad mention it, you must be very careful, child.
tien-mei: don't worry, granny.
granny: look out exclamation

OCCURRENCE: i will.
(taking the red lantern, tien-mei goes into the inner room. exit.)
(cobbler throws away an empty match-box, walks over and knocks at the door to ask for a match.)
cobbler: open the door.
granny: who's there?
cobbler: me, the cobbler.
granny: wait a moment. (opens the door.)
cobbler (enters): ma'am.
granny: what do you want?
cobbler: i want a match.
granny: there are some on top of the cupboard.
cobbler: thank you, where's the girl? (lights his cigarette.)
granny: she's not well.
cobbler: not well? where is she?
cobbler: in bed in the inner room.
cobbler: on exclamation thank you. (exit.)
granny: filthy dog.
(two spies enter at cobbler's signal. they whisper together.
as granny closes the door they push into the house.)
granny: who are you?
spy b: we are checking up.
spy a: where's your grand-daughter?
granny: she's ill.
spy b: ill? where is she?
granny: in bed in the other room.
spy b: tell her to get up exclamation
(granny: she's ill. let her rest. spy b: get out of the way exclamation (pushes granny aside and reaches to lift the door curtain.)(voice off behind the curtain: "granny, who's there?")
granny: police checking up.
(looking at each other helplessly, the spies go out. granny closes the door behind them. she turns round and stares in surprise.)
(hui-lien comes out of the inner room.)
granny: ah exclamation what brings you here, hui-lien?
hui-lien: granny li exclamation
(sings "hsi pi liu shui")
tien-mei has slipped away through our house, my mother-in-law sent me to let you know.
when i heard those spies questioning you i pretended to be tien-mei lying ill in bed.
when tien-mei returns, she can come through our house.

with me helping, you don't have to worry.
granny (gratefully): you've been a tremendous help.
tien-mei (comes out of the inner room.)
tien-mei: hui-lien exclamation
(granny: i have to go, tien-mei.
hui-lien: so you're back, tien-mei.
granny: if it weren't for hui-lien we'd have been in serious trouble.
hui-lien: it's good you're back. i must be going now.
tien-mei: thank you.
(hui-lien enters the inner room. exit.)
granny: go and put the stone in place, tien-mei.
tien-mei goes into the inner room. granny hangs up the lantern. tien-mei enters again.
granny: did you find the knife-grinder?
tien-mei: i searched several streets but couldn't find him.
i hurried back for fear those spies might discover that i was out.
granny: you did right exclamation
(enter hou. he sends cobbler away and knocks at the door.)
tien-mei: who's there?
hou: captain hatoyama is coming to pay you a visit.
tien-mei: hui-lien exclamation
(granny: if i am arrested, tien-mei, you must try your best to deliver the code to the cypress mountains.
tien-mei: don't worry exclamation
hou: open the door exclamation
(granny: go and open the door.
tien-mei: yes. (opens the door.)
(hatoyama enters and comes into the house. hou follows and stands by.)
hatoyama: how are you, madam?
granny: so you are mr. hatoyama?
hatoyama: yes, i'm hatoyama.
granny: just a minute, please. i'll tidy up and go with you.
hatoyama: oh, that's not what i came for. li yu-ho said
that he left something with you, madam.
granny: what?

hatoyama: the code.
granny: what does he mean, child?
hatoyama: it's a book.
granny: a book?
hatoyama: that's right.
granny: mr. hatoyama.
(sings "hsi pi yuan pan")
my family has always suffered from hunger and cold,
one of us three knows how to read.
what would we want with a book in our home?
hatoyama (continues the singing):
since li yu-ho has told me about that book,
why try to hide it and fool me?
tien-mei (continues the singing)
Let my dad come and find it, why trouble yourself?

Hayato: now, now, if you give me that book, I'll send Li Yu-ho straight home and make him a vice-section chief, I promise all of you wealth and fame.

Granny: hum, exclamation
(continues to sing)
I look upon wealth and fame as dust, we poor people find coarse food very tasty, since you have taken such trouble to come for it --
(to Tien-Mei) go and find it for him.
(Tien-Mei goes into the inner room and brings out the almanac which she hands to Granny.)
Granny (to Hayato, continues to sing):
so that you will not have come for nothing.
(hands the "book" to Hayato.)
Hayato: that's it, that must be it, an almanac? (leafing through it) I'll take it with me and study it, what about going to see your son, madam?
Granny: very well, exclamation look after the house, Tien-Mei, Hayato: no exclamation the girl must come too exclamation
Tien-Mei: let's go, Granny exclamation
(sings "hsi pi san pan")
filled with courage and strength like dad, I have nothing to fear
(granny and Tien-Mei leave the house.)
(Hayato follows. Hou orders the spies to seal the door.)
Granny (continues the singing):
revolutionaries can stand the collapse of heaven and earth exclamation
(granny and grand-daughter walk straight forward, then strike a dramatic pose.)
(lights fade.)

---

Secret code, the hidden microphone?
Hou: already installed.

Hayato: good, we'll hear what they say when the old woman meets her son, perhaps we'll find out something this way.
Bring the old woman in.
Hou: yes, sir. (to offstage) come along exclamation
(Enter Granny.)
Hayato: do you know this place, madam?
Granny: it's the gendarme headquarters.
Hayato: this is where your son will ascend to heaven exclamation
when a man has committed a crime and his mother refuses to save his life when she has it in her power, don't you think she is cruel?
Granny (sternly, putting the vile enemy on trial): what kind of talk is that exclamation you've arrested my son for no reason, now you want to kill him, you are the criminals, it's you who are cruel, you kill the chinese, and you want to shift the blame on to the chinese people, on to me, an old woman?
Hayato: all right exclamation go and see your son exclamation
(Granny walks off resolutely. Hayato signs to Hou to follow her.)

Hayato: take Li Yu-ho there.
Sergeant: bring Li ... Yu-ho exclamation ...
(dark change.)
(A corner of the execution ground: a high wall, a steep slope, a sturdy pine reaching to the sky. In the distance a high mountain pierces into the clouds.)
Li (offstage, sings "erh huang tan pan"): at the gaceler's blood-thirsty cry...
(Enters and strikes a dramatic pose.)
I stride forth from my cell.
(Two Japanese gendarmes push him, with a strong sense of righteousness, Li stands chest out, undaunted. Then he performs a series of characteristic Peking opera dance movements: moving briskly sideways on both legs, backing a few steps on one leg, a pause; turning round on one leg and then swinging the other and striking a dramatic pose. He advances boldly, forcing the two Japanese gendarmes to retreat.)
(Li rubs his wounded chest, then places one foot on a rock and nurses his knee. He casts a contemptuous glance at his chains and fully displays his noble spirit.)
Li (sings "nui Lung"): though heavy chains shackles me hand and foot, they cannot fetter my spirit that storms the heavens.
(Feeling a sharp pain in his wounded legs, he backs a few steps on one leg, nurses his knees and finally stands on one leg in a dramatic pose.)
Li (sings "yuan pan"):
that villain hatoyama used every torture to get the code,
my bones are broken, my flesh is torn,
but my will is firmer than ever.
walking boldly to the execution ground, i look afar:
the red flag of revolution is raised on high,
the flames of resistance spread far and wide.
japanese bandits, let's see how much longer you can
rage exclamation
once the storm is past (changes to "man san yen")
flowers will bloom,
new china will shine like the morning sun,
red flags will fly all over the country.
this thought heightens my confidence
and my resolve strengthened.
(changes to "yuan pan")
i have done very little for the party,
i'm worried that the code hasn't got to the mountains.
wang's only contact was with me,
the wretch can betray no one else;
my mother and daughter are as firm as steel,
hatoyama, try and get the secret code exclamation
you may ransack heaven and earth
but you will never find it.
revolutionaries, fear nothing on earth,
they will for ever march forward.
(enter granny.)
granny: yu-ho exclamation
li (looks back): mother exclamation
(granny (rums over to support li, sings "erh huang san pan"): again i live through that day seventeen years ago,
and burn with hate for the foe of my class and country.
these...japanese devils, cruel and treacherous,
have beaten you black and blue,
my son, my son exclamation
li: don't grieve for me, mother exclamation
(granny (continues to sing):
with such a fine son... i shouldn't grieve.
li: my good mother exclamation
(sings "erh huang erh liu")
brought up by the party to be a man of steel,
i fight the foe and never give ground,
i'm not afraid
to have every bone in my body broken,
i'm not afraid
to be locked up until i wear through the floor of my cell.
its makes my heart bleed to see our country ravaged,
i burn with anger for my people's suffering,
however hard the road of revolution,
we must press on in the steps of the glorious dead.
my only regret if i die today
is the "account" i have not settled.
(gestures to indicate the secret code.)
-16-

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1970

News from Hsihhua News Agency

to help me fight those brutes,
this red lantern is our heirloom.
oh dad, the treasure you leave me is so vast,
that a thousand carts and ten thousand boats
cannot hold it all.
i give you my word i will keep the lantern always safe.
li (sings "en hau san pan"): i,
as wave follows wave in the great yangtze river,
our red lantern will be passed on from hand to hand.
(to tien-mei)
if some day to name you return,
find our relatives, make a living, clear that "account,"
gestures to indicate the code.
i'll have no worries.
(japanese gendarmes enter pushing granny, enter sergeant.)
sergeant: captain hatoyama gives you five more minutes to think
it over. if you still refuse to give up the secret code,
you will all be shot. (drags tien-mei away.) only five
minutes left, girl. give up the code and save the whole family.
understand? speak up exclamation
(firmly, tien-mei walks back to her dear ones.)
sergeant: where is the code?
tien-mei: i -- don't -- know exclamation
sergeant: shoot them all.
gendarmes: yes.
li: no use baring your fangs exclamation tien-mei, let's
take granny's arms and go together.
("the international" is played, gravely and firmly,
the three walk arm in arm up a slope with their heads high.)
(enter hatoyama.)
hatoyama: wait exclamation i give you one more minute to
think it over.
(li: with a spirit that shakes the universe: hatoyama, you can
never kill all the chinese people, all the chinese communists.
you must think of the end in store for you scoundrels
exclamation
hatoyama: terrible exclamation (to sergeant.) act according to
plan exclamation (exit.)
sergeant: shoot them exclamation
(to the militant strains of "the international," the
three revolutionaries of three generations, heads high,
walk up the slope, defying death. they go out.)
(japanese gendarmes follow.)
silence, offstage, li shouts: "down with japanese
imperialism exclamation" "long live the chinese communist
party exclamation" the three of them shout with their arms
raised: "long live chairman mao exclamation"
(a volley of shots. two japanese gendarmes drag tien-mei
in and throw her down.)
tien-mei (standing up, turns to call): dad exclamation

scene nine

advancing wave upon wave

immediately after the last scene. dawn. li's house, interior
and exterior view.

(as the curtain rises, tien-mei enters the room, leans
back against the door. looking around, full of sorrow
and hatred, she thinks of her martyred father and
grandmother.

li: dad exclamation tien-mei: dad exclamation (rests her
head on the table and sob.s. a pause. slowly rising, she
sees the red lantern, hurries over and takes it.)
granny, dad, i know what you died for. i shall carry on
the task you left unfinished and be the successor to the
red lantern. i'm determined to deliver the code to the
pyre mountains and avenge your bloody murder. hatoyama,
you may arrest me or release me at will, but you'll never
get the secret code exclamation
(sings "hsi pi tai pan").
i burst with anger when i think of the foe exclamation
(changes to "kau san yen").
repressing my rage i grind my teeth,
using every trick to get the code,
hatoyama has killed my granny and dad exclamation
News from HSINHUA NEWS AGENCY

changes to "ern liu"
biting my hate, chewing my rage,
I force them down my throat,
Let them sprout in my heart.
I'll never yield, I'll never retreat,
(changes to "kuai pan")
no tears shall wet my cheeks,
Let them flow into my heart
to nourish the bursting seeds of hatred.
flames of rage, teen leagues high,
will burn away this reign of the forces of darkness.
I'm prepared; arrest me, release me,
use your whips and lash, your locks and chains,
break my bones, you will never get the code.
just wait, you villain hatoyama,
this is tieh-mei's answer exclamation
I'll go now exclamation (picks up the red lantern, ready to leave.)

(hui-lien comes out of the inner room.)

hui-lien: sister hui-lien exclamation
(tieh-mei puts down the lantern and bolts the door.)
hui-lien, my mother has come to see you.
(aunt tien emerges from the inner room.)
aunt tien: tieh-mei exclamation
tieh-mei: aunty.... (runs into her arms.)
aunt tien: child, we have heard what happened to your dad and grandma, we'll see how much longer those beasts can ravage our land exclamation there are spies outside, tien-mei, you mustn't leave by this door, slip out through our house. hurry, change jackets with hui-lien.
tieh-mei: no, aunty, I mustn't get you into trouble.
aunt tien: my child exclamation (while helping tieh-mei to change jackets with hui-lien she sings "hsî pi san pan")
none but the poor help the poor, we are two bitter gourds on the same vine; we must save you from the tiger's jaws, so that you can go forward on your course.
tieh-mei: but what if something happens to you?
aunt tien: we are both working-class families, we have shared bitterness and hatred for many years. no matter how risky it is, I must see you safely away.
tieh-mei: (with gratitude): aunty....
aunt tien: hurry up, child exclamation
hui-lien: be quick, tieh-mei exclamation
tieh-mei: I shall never forget you, sister and aunty.
aunt tien: go quickly.
(picking up the red lantern, tieh-mei goes into the inner room. exit.)
aunt tien: be very careful, hui-lien.

(scene ten)

ambushing and annihilating the enemy

immediately after the last scene. on the road leading to the cypress mountains.

(as the curtain rises, enter knife-grinder with two guerrillas dressed as peasants. enter tieh-mei. they meet.)
tieh-mei: surprise exclamation (takes out the red lantern from the basket and holds it aloft.)
knife-grinder: tieh-mei exclamation (turns to the guerrillas.)
keep guard exclamation
tieh-mei: I've found you at last, uncle exclamation my dad and granny....
knife-grinder: we know everything. don't grieve, tieh-mei, turn your sorrow into strength. we'll be avenged exclamation have you got the code with you?
tieh-mei: yes.
knife-grinder: that's fine.
tieh-mei: uncle, my neighbour hui-lien helped me. she disguised herself as me and led the spies off after her. that's how I was able to get the code and bring it here.
knife-grinder: the enemy must be suspecting hui-lien's family.
(c to guerrilla a.) old feng, help the tiens move as quickly as possible.
guerrilla a: right exclamation (exit.)
(a police car siren is heard.)
guerrilla b: the enemy's coming, old chao.
knee-grinder: you take tieh-mei up the mountain. we'll deal with them.
guerrilla b leads tieh-mei off.
(wang shouts offstage: "hail exclamation" japanese gendarmes enter, with hatoyama and wang in the lead. knife-grinder blocks their way. hatoyama shouts: "take him exclamation" knife-grinder snatches wang's pistol and kills a japanese gendarme. then he strikes wang with his bench.)
(the guerrillas jump out of a grove. dramatic pose.)
(on the crag a guerrilla kills a Japanese gendarme.)
(hatoyama and wang run off, knife-grinder and the guerrillas pursue them.)
(the guerrillas dash down from the crag and chase the enemy.)
(a guerrilla with a red-tasselled spear fights two Japanese gendarmes, they flee, followed by the guerrilla.)
(knife-grinder chases wang, they lock in struggle.)
center hatoyama with Japanese gendarmes, fighting at close quarters, the guerrillas wipe out all the enemies, shooting down the traitor wang, and running hatoyama through with a sword.)
(the ambush has been a great success, the guerrillas form a tableau of heroes, in a valiant dramatic pose.)
(lights fade.)

(curtain)

scene eleven

forward in victory

immediately after the last scene, the cypress mountains.

(as the curtain rises, red flags flutter against a clear blue sky, the guerrilla leader walks down the hill slope, knife-grinder enters with tien-mei, all the guerrillas enter, solemnly, tien-mei hands the code to the guerrilla leader, brandishing their rifles and swords, all rejoice in their victory, tien-mei holds aloft the red lantern while crimson light radiates. the curtain slowly falls.)

(the end)