

Masthead Logo

The Iowa Review

Volume 26
Issue 1 *Spring*

Article 38

1996

Libations, Song #10

Marilyn Chin

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Chin, Marilyn. "Libations, Song #10." *The Iowa Review* 26.1 (1996): 154-154. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.4552>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

LIBATIONS, SONG #10

*Have you filled the cups for libations, my sister?
No, I have no wine, no hen to offer, my brother.*

*Are there fresh peonies in the altar, my sister?
No, winter is cruel and the petals have fallen, my brother.*

*Did you cord my hat, patch my jacket, my sister?
No, I have no cord nor rags for mending, my brother.*

*Did you catch a carp from the river, my sister, and reserve me
the head?
No, the river is dry, my brother, where the dead must leave their
faces.*

*Did you marry my friend, the kerosene merchant, my sister? Did he warm
your bed?
Yes, I married your friend the kerosene merchant, by twilight our
flame was gone.*

*Why is the cauldron empty, my sister, and no fire to warm the stew?
If there's no kindling for the living, my brother, would there be
flesh for the dead?*