The Ballad of Mulan

木兰辞

Translated by Bob, Edited by Sarah Findlay
唧唧复唧唧，木兰当户织。不闻机杼声，惟闻女叹息。

Long age, in a village in northern China, there lived a girl named Mulan. One day, She sat at her loom weaving cloth, Click-clack, Click-clack! Went the loom. Suddenly, the sound of weaving changed to sorrowful sighs.

“Mulan, what troubles you?” her mother asked.

“Nothing, Mother,” Mulan softly replied.
Mulan’s mother asked her again and again, until Mulan finally said, “Invaders are attacking. The emperor is calling for troops. Last night, I saw the draft poster and twelve scrolls of names in the market. Father’s names is on every one.”
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昨夜见军帖，可汗大点兵，
军书十二卷，卷卷有爷名。
“But Father is old and frail,” Mulan sighed.

“How can he fight? He has no grown son and I have no elder brother. I will go to the markets. I shall buy a saddle and a horse, I must fight in Father’s place.”
From the eastern Market Mulan bought a horse, and from the western market, a saddle. From the southern market she bought a bridle, and from the northern market, a whip. At dawn, Mulan dressed in her armor and bid a sad farewell to her, mother, sister, and brother.

东市买骏马, 西市买鞍鞯, 南市买辔头, 北市买长鞭。
朝辞爷娘去, 暮宿黄河边。不闻爷娘唤女，但闻黄河流水鸣溅溅。

By nightfall she was camped by the bank of the Yellow River. She thought she heard her mother calling her name, but it was only the sound of the river crying.
At sunrise Mulan took leave of the Yellow River. At duck she reached the peak of the Black Mountain. In the darkness she longed to heard her father's voice, but heard only the neighing of enemy horses far away.

旦辞黄河去, 暮宿黑山头, 不闻爷娘唤女声, 但闻燕山胡骑鸣啾啾。
Mulan rode ten thousand miles to flight a hundred battles. She Crossed peaks and passes like a bird in flight. Nights at the camp were harsh and cold, but Mulan endured every hardship. Knowing her father was sage warmed her heart.

The war dragged on. Fierce battles ravaged the land. One after another, noble generals lost their lives. Mulan’s skill and courage won her respect and rank. After ten years, she returned as a great general, triumphant and victorious!

万里赴戎机, 关山度若飞. 朔气传金柝, 寒光照铁衣. 将军百战死, 壮士十年归.
The emperor summoned Mulan to the High palace. He praised her for her bravery and leadership in battle. The court would bestow many great titles upon her. Mulan would be showered with gifts of gold.
“Worthy General, you may have your heart’s desire,” the Emperor said.

“I have no need for honors or gold,” Mulan replied.

“All I ask for is a swift camel to take me back home.” The emperor sent a troop to escort Mulan on her trip.

可汗问所欲，木兰不用尚书郎；
愿驰千里足，送儿还故乡。
In town, the news of Mulan’s return created great excitement. Holding each other, her proud parents walked to the village gate to welcome her. Waiting at home, Mulan’s sister beatified herself. Her brother sharpened his knife to prepare a pig and sheep for the feast in Mulan’s honor.

爷娘闻女来，出郭相扶将；阿姊闻妹来，当户理红妆；小弟闻姊来，磨刀霍霍向猪羊。
Home at last! Mulan threw open her bedroom door and smiled. She removed her armor and changed into one of her favorite dresses. She brushed out her shiny black hair and placed a yellow flower on her face. She looked into the mirror and smiled again, happy to be home.

开我东阁门，坐我西阁床，脱我战时袍，著我旧时裳，当窗理云鬓，对镜贴花黄。
What a surprise it was when Mulan appeared at the door! Her comrades were astonished and amazed.

"How is this possible?" they asked.

"How could we have fought side by side with you for ten years and not have known you were a woman?"
Mulan replied, “They say the male rabbit likes to hop and leap, while the female rabbit prefers to sit still. But in times of dangers, when the two rabbits scurry by, who can tell male from female?” Mulan’s glory spread through the land. And to this day we saying of this day we sing of this brave woman who loved her family and served her country, asking for nothing in return.

雄兔脚扑朔，雌兔眼迷离。双兔傍地走，安能辨我是雄雌？
THANK YOU!!