

# Ink Darkly the Painted Seasons a1 s01-2

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A creative story on an empire of China's magnificence and decadence, a rebellious then subdued Korea divided into three kingdoms, and a united Japan somewhat more remote from the others, highly influenced by China's culture but looking inward until it begins to harbor imperialistic ambitions.

Scene 01

HARU

... of the firmament embroiled with  
the deep, from an undistinguished  
medley came strains calamitous and  
wailing, and the once whole  
separated into yin and yang, male  
and female.

NOBORU

Of one dead form, which bore  
imprinted all features of nature,  
to mutative shapes drawn into  
galling service, that of life

## **SCENE 02**

It is nearly full winter. HANEUL is currently the prince of a "Korean" kingdom. After a failed hunt chasing a fox, and very bored, HANEUL leaves his party to go off alone. Then he encounters a mysterious woman.

HANEUL

On a languid day of dalliance and

raillery among courtiers after a  
hunt, I wearily beat the gourd of  
ennui and left them, seeking better  
amusement elsewhere.

(beat)

Is there no end to this slack  
quietude?

Enter Fox Spirit.

FOX SPIRIT

Princely one, has the usual dreary  
bevy, whom you so carelessly left  
in sleepy strain, soured your  
mouth? Did not the shining blanched  
fur of the poor hunted fox,  
affrighted from gambol and frisk,  
entice you on?

A dog which has followed HANEUL growls menacingly at Fox  
Spirit and makes to leap at her, and she shies away. HANEUL  
sharply reprimands the dog and sends it whimpering back.

HANEUL

O goddess, come you as a visitation  
of death, or a deceitful vision of  
fatigue? For now, having perceived  
beauty of such freshness as to  
shame life in its youth, I trace  
gladly your steps. Not merely  
flowers or willows in the golden  
moon, nor gleaming white pearl, but  
flaming ruby and flashing diamond.  
For fire cannot vie in purity with  
the charms of the glorious

spectacle, a figure with lissome  
step, I behold before me.

FOX SPIRIT

Dissipate the first gravid thoughts  
pondered in so erratic a strain.

HANEUL

Though I speak in libidinous  
lewdness, pray forgive me; you are  
as a robe richly adorned of a  
hundred hawks worked in gold, no  
mere fragrance of flowers, and I am  
of addled mind, a dunce, at the  
sight.

FOX SPIRIT

Wherefore do you feel a stranger,  
greeting with conventional  
salutations only?

HANEUL

Lest you believe me a loose rake,  
dissolute debauchee, with malignity  
and perversity as my design--

FOX SPIRIT

Worry not; if you are so, I join in  
lust as a sybarite. Let  
unprincipled license rise wanton.  
Bend inclination where it will.

Fox Spirit sheds most of her many layers of loose white  
clothing, each falling sensuously to the ground, her amber  
eyes intent on him.

HANEUL

A beauteous white-feathered shower  
of crystal, descended from the  
clouds in stolen fleece!

Haneul takes her in his arms, and things ensue in the usual  
manner of a man and woman together.

HANEUL

So long I have journeyed a  
poverty-stricken fugitive seeking  
shelter, and know rest only in the  
hollow of your hands. With you,  
clad in frost and snow alike, I  
would stray an outcast to earth's  
remotest limits, wherever  
far-roaming wanders convey.

FOX SPIRIT

(aside)

I have subjugated you, Prince  
Haneul, as a willing victim, though  
you would have made me prey to your  
swords and spears. 'Tis but a game  
to me, as 'twas for you, one that I  
won. Here indeed desire bridles  
wisdom's rein. The more fools men!  
(beat)

Dim morn of the skies hastens on in  
enfeebled silver beams to weightier  
gold; winter slumber beckons, and I  
tarry no longer with this captive  
quarry, nor betray scant regard.

