Silk of scented phoenix tail lies in thin folds; The Lady in the Moon translated by Nancy Hunter

Li Shang-yin
Silk of scented phoenix tail lies in thin folds

Silk of scented phoenix tail lies in thin folds.
Hunched within the green brocade canopy,
she sews all through the long nights.
Her fan, like a slice of the moon's soul,
can't hide her shame—
When his carriage rolled out, their words
had been carried off in the sound of thunder.
In the silence the candle already flickers.
No word had come to justify the red wedding wine.
By the river bank his dappled horses are still tied
to the courtesan's drooping willow.
How can she wait for news, a good Southwest Wind?

Li Shang-yin

Translated from the Chinese
by Nancy Hunter

The Lady in the Moon

In candlelight shadows deepen
on the mica clouds in banks
across my screen.

The Milky Way slowly falls.
The morning star sinks.

Chang O must regret stealing
the drink of immortality,
condemned every night to
the jade green sea, blue sky.

Li Shang-yin

Translated from the Chinese
by Nancy Hunter