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Libations, Song #10

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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?*