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?