

AI Acknowledgement

☒ I have not used AI in my assignment

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

☐ I have used AI in my assignment

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The Fake Daughter's Marriage Swap 贗女易嫁

Good afternoon, Professor Ngo and fellow classmates. Today, I will share a story from the *Collectanea of Ethical Exemplars* 道德叢書.

My presentation will be divided into three parts:

1. Original text
2. Translation text
3. Analysis and summary

Part 1:

Let's first look at the original text of the story.

The title of this story is 'The Fake Daughter's Marriage Swap' The story takes place in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644).

When I read this story, I found it very interesting and meaningful. So, what kind of story happened between the fake daughter and the real daughter?

Part 2

Now let's move on to the translations; let me tell you this story. It all starts with three friends in an old Chinese city called Nanchang.

Li was in the wood industry, Duan managed a nail shop, and Liu made his living as a fortune-teller. During the Jiajing era (1522-1566), times got tough during a big famine, so the three friends decided to pack up and move together to a new place called Jinsha Sandbar. They became neighbours and were extremely close—like family.

Li had a nephew living with him named Li Qiao 李橋 (1512 – ?), Qiao was skilled in poetry and earned his living as a teacher. Liu told Qiao's fortune and believed he was destined for wealth and high status. So, being a good friend and a bit of a

matchmaker, Liu suggested: “Why not arrange for Qiao to marry Duan’s daughter?” Everyone agreed, and the match was set.

In the year Gengzi of the Longqing era (in 1570), Qiao, while preparing for the imperial examinations, intended to marry the Duan’s daughter and return with her to his hometown. But here’s where things get tricky. Duan’s wife—the mother of the bride—started having second thoughts. She worried to herself: “What if this ‘future wealth’ never happens? And how can I send my beloved daughter so far away from home?” So, she made a secret, selfish decision. Instead of sending her real daughter, she sent another girl to marry Li Qiao, pretending it to be her daughter. A total swap! And nobody knew—not Li Qiao, not the matchmaker Liu, no one.

After returning to his hometown, Qiao passed successive examinations and later took up an official post in Chengdu. He was living the successful life! Passing through the Chu region, he even stopped by to visit his in-laws, the Duans, bringing them expensive gifts as a sign of respect and gratitude.

Meanwhile, what happened to the real daughter? She ended up marrying a local man named Mr. Xiao, who worked a humble, low-paid job. Life became a real struggle for them, and they sank deeper into poverty.

Every day, the real daughter couldn’t help but think about the fake daughter, now living in luxury as an official’s wife. She was eaten up by jealousy, regret, and bitterness. That heavy sadness and resentment stayed with her, until it ultimately took her life.

Part3

What can we learn from this story?

In life, each of us views problems from different perspectives and thus problems will have different answers. In this story, we also try to think from the perspectives of different people to see what we can learn from their choices and destinies.

Duan's wife:

Because Duan's wife was uncertain whether Li Qiao would truly achieve wealth and success, and because she could not bear to let her daughter marry far away, she decided to substitute another girl in her daughter's place. This choice caused her to lose integrity and deceive both Li Qiao and Liu. Without realising it, she also planted the seeds of her own daughter's tragedy. Sow good causes and reap good results; sow evil causes and reap evil results. Her real daughter's marriage was unhappy. By allowing a substitute girl to marry on her daughter's behalf, she also failed to consider the feelings of that girl. Only caring about one's own daughter while disregarding the daughters of others shows a lack of empathy. Confucius said: 'Do not do to others what you would not have others do to you.' We should learn from this that we should have empathy. Even if we think something is bad, we should not pass on this badness to those around us. From her actions we can see that although her intentions came from maternal love, her method was wrong, and the results ended up harming both others and herself.

The Real Daughter:

The real daughter is the greatest victim in this entire story. Her original marriage was altered by her parents' decision, and because of this she remained at home and eventually married into a poor family. After her life was exchanged, her heart was gradually filled with comparison, disappointment, and resentment, and she ultimately passed away from the emotional burden. From her experience, we learn that parents' decisions can deeply shape a child's life, and that choices truly matter. When facing choices, we must act with caution and make wise judgments. In our younger years, when life experience is still limited, we should seek timely guidance from teachers or parents when encountering problems, rather than making decisions blindly on our own. Furthermore, the path of life is seldom smooth sailing; ups and downs are the norm. When we encounter adversity, what is tested is not only our ability to solve problems but also the composure and wisdom to accept reality and remain grounded in the present. Often, people tend to fall into the trap of comparison, either contrasting

their current situation with past favourable circumstances or measuring their lives against others. The *Application of Equilibrium translated by James Legge*

(Zhongyong 中庸) states: ‘The superior man does what is proper to the position in which he is; he does not wish to go beyond it. In a position of wealth and honour, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honour. In a position of poverty and meanness, he does what is proper to a position of poverty and meanness.’ One must recognize one's own position and live in a manner befitting it. In times of wealth and honour, guard against arrogance, extravagance, ostentation, stinginess, and self-indulgence. Instead, cultivate humility, cherish your blessings, act for the benefit of others, accumulate good deeds, and live with a grateful heart. In addition, do not let poverty breed resentment, inferiority, comparisons, despair, or laziness. But let it teach you acceptance, self-confidence, growth, and diligence. In any circumstance, make your life fulfilling and happy.

Li Qiao:

Li Qiao was steady, trustworthy, and respectful of the marriage agreement. Through his own hard work, he gradually built his achievements step by step. He also understood gratitude and treated Duan's parents with courtesy and kindness. That kindness and gratitude enable a person to go further in life.

It's truly a small story with profound wisdom. We have learned a lot of wisdom about life.

And that ends my presentation. You can have a look on my reference list. I would greatly appreciate any feedback and corrections you may have. Thank you for listening.

The Fake Daughter's Marriage Swap

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Outline

1

Original Text

2

Translation Text

3

Analysis and Summary



1 Original Text

賈女易嫁

南昌李某業木。段某業釘。劉某業星命。俱以嘉靖歲飢。遷楚省金沙洲。比鄰鄉戚。至厚也。李某有姪名橋依於叔。工詞藝。授徒為生。劉閱其命富貴。因為作伐。聘段女。隆慶庚子橋將應省試。欲娶女偕歸。而段妻中變。曰：「富貴未可期。奈何舍愛女適異鄉。」乃以賈女歸之。橋與劉皆不知也。橋歸即聯捷。擢守成都。過楚餽遺段父母甚厚。其真女適蕭氏。子習賤工。日致貧窘。私羨賈者得榮貴。鬱憤而死。



Story: The Fake Daughter's Marriage Swap



2 Translation Text

南昌李某業木。段某業釘。劉某業星命。俱以嘉靖歲飢。遷楚省金沙洲。比鄰鄉戚。至厚也。

There were three people in Nanchang Fu: Li was in the wood industry, Duan managed a nail shop, and Liu made his living as a fortune-teller. During the Jiajing era (1522-1566), many people suffered from famine. Together, the three migrated to Jinsha Sand bar¹ in the Chu region (present-day Hubei area). The three were neighbours and shared an exceptionally close bond.



¹ Jinsha Zhou was a historical sand bar located near the confluence of the Yangtze River and the Han River, in what is now Wuchang, China.

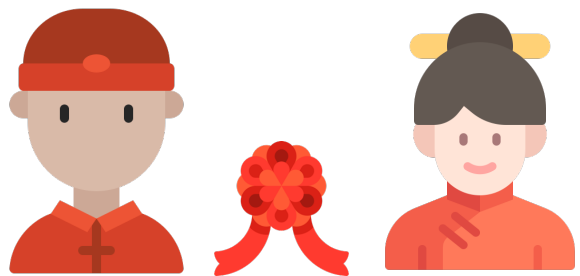


李某有姪名橋依
於叔。工詞藝。
授徒為生。劉閱
其命富貴。因為
作伐。聘段女。

Li had a nephew named Li Qiao who lived with his uncle. Qiao was skilled in poetry and earned his living as a teacher. Liu told Qiao's fortune and believed he was destined for wealth and high status. Therefore, Liu acted as a matchmaker and fixed the match between Qiao and Duan's daughter.



隆慶庚子橋將應省試。欲娶女偕歸。而段妻中變。曰：「富貴未可期。奈何舍愛女適異鄉。」乃以贗女歸之。橋與劉皆不知也。



Fake Bride

In the year Gengzi of the Longqing era (1570), Qiao, while preparing for the imperial examinations, intended to marry the daughter of the Duan family and return with her to his hometown. Yet Duan's wife repented in her heart, saying, "Wealth and nobility have not yet come to pass, how can we let our beloved daughter marry far away in another place?" She thus sent a fake daughter to marry him instead. Neither Qiao nor Liu knew anything about it.



橋歸即聯捷。擢
守成都。過楚餽
遺段父母甚厚。



After returning to his hometown, Qiao passed successive examinations and later took up an official post in Chengdu. Passing through the Chu region, he presented rich gifts to the Duan family's parents.



What happened to the real daughter



其真女適蕭氏。子習
賤工。日至貧窘。私
羨贗者得榮貴。鬱憤
而死。

The Duan family's real daughter married into the Xiao. Xiao worked in a low-paid occupation. Their family's circumstances grew increasingly impoverished. The Duan daughter envied the fake daughter for her glory and wealth, and she died with deep melancholy and resentment in her heart.

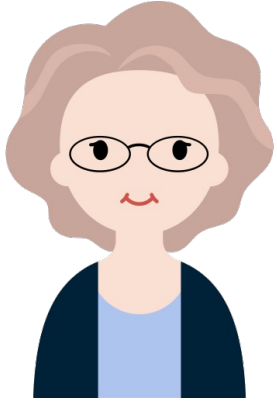


3 Analysis and Summary

What can we learn from this story?

- From different perspectives
- Gain insight from choices and destinies





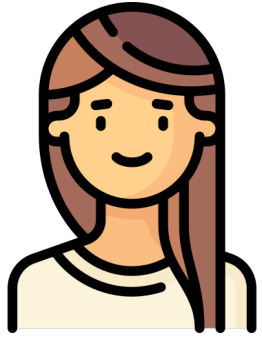
Duan's wife

- Integrity
- Sow good causes and reap good results; Sow evil causes and reap evil results.
- Do not do to others what you would not have others do to you.²

己所不欲，勿施於人。

Thus Spoke the Master (Lunyu 論語)

(Trans. Xu Yuanchong)



The real daughter

- Parents' choices shape a child's life.
- Decisions require caution and guidance.
- Life's challenges demand composure and avoidance of comparison.

The superior man does what is proper to the position in which he is; he does not wish to go be-yond it. In a position of wealth and honour, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honour. In a position of poverty and meanness, he does what is proper to a position of poverty and meanness.³

君子素其位而行，不願乎其外。素富貴，行乎富貴；素貧賤，行乎貧賤。

“Kung Yung” (Zhongyong 中庸)
The Book of Rites (Liji 禮記)
(Trans. Legge)

Arrogance
Extravagance
Ostentation
Stinginess
Self-indulgence



Humility
Prudence
Benefit others
Virtue
Grateful heart



Resentment
Inferiority
Envy
Despair
Laziness



Acceptance
self-Confidence
Self-Focus
Aspiration
Diligence





Li Qiao

- Steady, trustworthy, respectful of commitments
- Lived with gratitude and treated others kindly

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Thank you for listening!

