CHAPTER 22

The House God and the House-site Goddess

Ch’ōnsarang of the country of Ch’ōnha and Chit’al of the country of Chiha exchanged vows for a hundred years and gave birth to a boy whose face was beautiful, whose presence was magnificent and whose speech was eloquent. They named the boy Hwang Uyang because he was born at Hwangsan Field and fostered him as the apple of their eyes.

Several days later, Hwang Uyang learned how to toddle and started to waddle along for himself. When he was seven years old, his parents taught him letters. His parents taught him just one letter, but he knew ten letters. He quickly mastered not only letters but also how to handle wood, stone and clay. So people said that he would be a great man in the future.

When Hwang Uyang was twenty years old, he got married and settled down.

One evening, Hwang Uyang dreamed an evil and awkward dream, so he had an ominous presentiment. He, at once, armed himself, put on a helmet, sat on the floor and kept a sharp lookout.

At this very moment, a strong wind blew from the east into one thousand balustrades and one thousand pavilions in the country of heaven. All the buildings collapsed and the castle in heaven was ruined. The king of the country discussed how to rebuild the castle with all the officials. One of the officials said that there was a man, Hwang Uyang, who was living at Hwangsan Field, and that only he could rebuild the castle.

All the officials reached an agreement that they would send a tall, quick messenger for Hwang Uyang.

The messenger who was ordered to capture Hwang Uyang was in a hurry. He wore a soldier’s helmet with a sun-design silk lining, a blue military uniform and tied a red belt around his waist. Then he departed for Hwangsan Field with a letter of attorney, and arrived at Hwang Uyang’s house in a moment.

The god who was in charge of Hwang Uyang’s fortune stopped the messenger as he was attempting to enter Hwang Uyang’s house. The messenger was completely nonplussed because he had no plan to capture Hwang Uyang.

At this time the Kitchen Goddess saw the messenger standing vacantly on the road.

‘You, messenger! Why are you moving about in confusion?’ asked the Kitchen Goddess.
‘I am a messenger of the country of heaven. One thousand balustrades and pavilions fell under the east wind. Because there is no carpenter to rebuild the buildings, the officials ordered that I capture and bring back Hwang Uyang. However, his fortune god is preventing me from catching him. So I am in an awkward position’, replied the messenger.

‘When Hwang Uyang goes to the toilet around dawn tomorrow, taking off his armour and helmet, you can catch him’, said the Kitchen Goddess.

‘Please, sir, you should naturally stop me from trying to capture and bring back Hwang Uyang. Why do you advise me to do that?’ asked the messenger.