

Four

La Dispute

There was once a great kingdom, and its great king had a beautiful daughter who passed her days in solitude, weaving garments for the pleasure of her father.

One day, while she was sitting beside the great river, peering across, she saw a handsome young shepherd boy leading his flock through the pasture.

Immediately, she fell in love. Thereafter, she became terribly disheartened, knowing that, due to her duties at the loom, she would be unable to pursue that love.

The king, aware that by his bidding such despair had befallen her, felt great remorse, and arranged for her to marry the shepherd.

Their marriage was one of happiness from the start, and every day thereafter they grew happier and happier.

However, in immersing herself in her marriage, the princess had neglected her weaving and the great king became angry.

Unable to reconcile with that anger, the great king banished each of the lovers to opposite sides of the great river, allowing them only to meet once each year: on the seventh day of the seventh month.

On that day, a ferryman would carry the shepherd boy across the river to the princess, and return him home at day's end.

However, if the princess has not fulfilled her obligations at the loom the king floods the river, and the two can not meet.