

# **Student Essay on The River-Merchant's Wife by Li Po**

## **The River-Merchant's Wife by Li Po**

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# Contents

<a href="#">Student Essay on The River-Merchant's Wife by Li Po.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Essay.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

## Essay

Nature Imagery and the passage of time are key elements in "the river merchants wife: a letter. Nature gives concrete examples to the emotions of the wife and ambiguous themes of the passage. Nature also gives aids in the swing of mood between the second and third paragraph.

The passage of time gives a sense of depth to the poem. Showing us that the feelings between the wife and her husband were cultivated over time and that long distances and periods of time fostered their love for each other. "You have been gone five months and the monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead." The wife after five months of longing moans for her husband just as the monkeys do. This quote is the marriage between two forces in the poem, Time and Nature.

Nature frequently illustrates the passage of time in the poem. "By the gate now, the moss is now grown" shows that the husband has been away so long that moss has grown because he never walks through. Butterfly pairs in the represent the state that the wife longs for, ones with her beloved, "the paired butterflies...in the west garden...they hurt me." This is different form the "calling of a thousand times" where she "never looked back."

The transition from "without dislike or suspicion" to "mingled...forever and forever," happens in the third paragraph, "at fifteen I stopped scowling, I desired my dust to be with yours." Nature, the dust, is used to help illustrate and give what the speaker is talking about more depth. Dust symbolizes a complete life cycle, from cradle to the grave, giving the wife's love for her husband more depth.

Nature Imagery, and its use of conveying the passage of time gives "The River Merchants Wife: A Letter" more meaning and depth. Language aided by imagery sifts the mood of the poem and gives tangible examples to ambiguous concepts throughout.