

Chinese Classic  
Cultural Stories Series



# 中国传说故事

Stories of Chinese Legends

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## 孟姜女哭长城

Meng Jiang Nu Weeping over the Great Wall



广东省出版集團  
廣東教育出版社

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“七日来秋风吹，孟姜烈女送寒衣。哭崩长城八百里，不见范郎来穿衣。”

“The autumn wind has been blowing for seven days, A heroic woman named Meng Jiang Nu brought winter clothes for her husband. She cried down an 800-li-long section of the Great Wall, because she could never see her beloved husband Fan put on the clothes.”

唱罢了这首民歌，要来讲一讲孟姜女哭长城的故事。这个故事，老人们都会讲，有的人还会编成民歌到处唱呢。据说这个故事起初是流传在山东的，后来又传到西北，传到东北，再传到华北、华中、西南，最后落脚在江南。于是各个地方的人，世世代代说孟姜女，就都说孟姜女是他们那里的人，故事的说法也千姿百态，大家添枝加叶，出现许多版本。不过故事再怎么变，大家都会说到孟姜女路远迢迢，要到长城边上去给她的丈夫送寒衣。当她知道丈夫死了，又被埋在长城底下的时候，她在长城边上号陶大哭。结果呢，那万里长城居然被她哭崩了一大段。

Finishing the folk song, we'll listen to the story of Meng Jiang Nu – the weeping woman over the Great Wall. All the aged are able to tell the story. Some even have made it into folk songs which are sung in all parts of China. It is said that the story appeared first in Shandong Province, and then it spread to the northwest, later the northeast. We can also hear the story in the north, the centre, the southwest of China, even

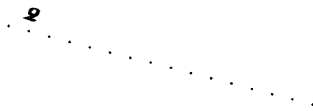




as far as the south of the Yangtze River. The story of Meng Jiang Nu is passed down from generation to generation all over the country. Everyone insists that Meng Jiang Nu once lived in his hometown. However, the story varies in different editions after people elaborated on the story and invested it with details. In all the editions, nevertheless, Meng Jiang Nu is said to have trudged a great distance and finally reached the Great Wall with the purpose of bringing winter clothes to her husband. On learning that her husband was dead and buried under the Great Wall, she was so sad that she cried loudly. Eventually, a large section of the Great Wall collapsed over her bitter wail.

今天我们就来说说孟姜女哭长城的故事吧。

Here goes the story how Meng Jiang Nu brought down the Great Wall with her tears.





## 一、姜女出世

### 1. The Birth of Meng Jiang Nu

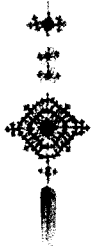
说起孟姜女出世，这里有一段有趣的小故事。据说当年就在松江府华亭县的一个村子里，贴隔壁住着两户人家，一户姓孟，一户姓姜，都是一对老夫妻，又都是没儿没女的。他们两家人家相处得蛮好，常常你来我往，相互照顾。

The birth of Meng Jiang Nu is an interesting story. As the legend goes, in a village of Huating County in the Prefecture of Songjing once lived two next door neighbors, one named Meng, the other Jiang. Both of them had no children. The two families were on good terms and received frequent visits and care from each other.

孟家的屋檐下有个燕子窝，每年春天，总会有一对燕子飞过来，和孟家老两口做伴。到了秋天，燕子飞到南方去过冬。第二年春天，按照老规矩，那两只燕子又会飞到孟家来做窝。一来二去的，也就成了一家人啦。

Under the roof of the Mengs' house was a swallow nest. A pair of swallows would come to live in the nest every spring. They kept good company to the old couple. When autumn came, the swallows would fly away and spend the winter in





the south. They made it a rule every year so the Mengs treated them as their family.

有一年，这对燕子生了四只小燕子，叽叽喳喳，非常热闹。后来，三只小燕子都会飞了，天天在屋檐下面兜圈子，只有一只不会飞。一天，那小燕子也想蹿出窝来飞飞看，不知道怎么一来，就跌落到孟家的窗台上。孟老太太过去一看，哎哟哟，蛮可爱的一只小燕子，怎么把一条腿给摔坏了呢？多可惜！

One year, the swallow couple gave birth to four little ones. The baby birds brought life to the family with their twittering. When all the baby birds except one learnt to fly they spiraled below the roof every day. One day, the one who couldn't wanted to have a try of his own. Unfortunately, it fell down onto the windowsill of the Mengs'. Mrs. Meng hurried up. To her great pity, the lovely little swallow broke one of its legs.

孟老太太心疼得不得了，连忙想办法，寻出点布头布脑来，小心翼翼地把小燕子的腿重新绑好。又怕它住在燕子窝里不安全，索性给它在窗台上做了个新窝，里边铺上一层草，又暖和，又舒服，每天给它吃点粥，还常常去捉几条小虫子来喂它呢。一喂喂了半个月。

The sight of the injured tugged at Mrs. Meng's heartstrings. She acted quickly. At first, she fetched some odd bits of cloth and bound up the bird's injured leg. After that, she built a new





nest for it on the windowsill in fear of its falling down once again. It was a warm and comfortable nest, covered with straw inside. Every day the bird was fed with porridge along with worms now and then. In this way, the old lady kept it for as long as half a month.

后来，天气冷了，受伤的小燕子也终于痊愈了，就跟着它的爸爸妈妈、哥哥姐姐们一起高高兴兴地飞走啦。

When it turned colder and colder, the injured swallow finally recovered. So it happily flew behind its parents together with its elder sisters and brothers to the south.

第二年春天，这一窝燕子又叽叽喳喳飞了回来。那只受过伤的小燕子嘴里还叼着一颗葫芦籽呢，一到孟家，就把葫芦籽轻轻地放在他家的窗台上。

The following spring the swallow family returned joyfully as usual. So did the little swallow which had received injury before. It was holding a seed of bottle gourd in its mouth. When they arrived, it placed the seed gently on the Mengs' windowsill.

孟老太太一看，哈哈，认识的，就是去年那只小燕子，她心里好不欢喜，就把那颗葫芦籽种在窗前的空地里，又是浇水，又是施肥。精心护理着。过了几天，那里果然长出一棵绿油油的葫





芦秧苗来。

Mrs. Meng recognized the little swallow at the first sight. She delightedly sewed the gourd seed in the open space in front of her window. She watered and fertilized it carefully. With tender care, a glossy and green gourd shoot sprouted after a few days.

葫芦秧苗越长越大，越长越高，一爬两爬，就爬到隔壁姜家去了。说来也怪，这棵葫芦爬了不少藤，枝叶茂盛，郁郁葱葱，后来却只结了一只葫芦。这只葫芦偏偏又去结在姜家的窗台前。

The young plant grew up bit by bit. At last its vines climbed over the wall and entered her neighbor, the Jiangs' yard. It seemed quite strange that green and luxuriant with exuberant vines as it was, the plant bore only one bottle gourd, just in front of the Jiangs' windowsill.

这只葫芦越长越大，越长越重，眼看着就要挂不住了。姜家老太太就在窗台前架起一块木板，托住了这只大葫芦。这只大葫芦和一般的葫芦都不一样，又大又圆，油光锃亮，就像是涂了一层油似的，特别招人喜欢。

When the fruit grew so big and heavy as to possibly fall from its stem at any moment, Mrs. Jiang supported it with a wooden board put up in front of the windowsill. The large gourd was especially attractive for it was unusually big and



round, and was shining as if coated with oil.

秋风起了，葫芦熟了，该采摘了。

When the autumn wind began to blow, it was time to harvest the ripe gourd.

这只葫芦归谁家呢？孟家和姜家都想要。

A problem arose. Which family should own it? Both the Mengs and the Jiangs claimed it.

孟家老太太说：“葫芦是我家的，种在我家地里，我浇的水，我施的肥，应该归我。”

“It’s ours. I have planted, watered and fertilized it. I’m the owner.” Mrs. Meng said.

姜家老太太有点不高兴了，噘着嘴巴说：“这葫芦明明长在我家的窗台前。你看，我还替它架起了一块木板呢。要不然，它早就掉到地上，碎了！”

Mrs. Jiang was offended by her words. Pouting her lips, she said, “The gourd is obviously in front of our windowsill. See, I have supported it with a wooden piece; otherwise, it must have dropped to crack on the ground long ago!”

孟家老公公听见了，眉头一皱，对老婆说：“别争了，别争





了，两家人家一向都蛮要好的，难道就为一只葫芦伤了和气吗？算了，算了，让给他们吧。”

Hearing it, Mr. Meng frowned and said to his wife, “Stop arguing, will you? We have been good neighbors. How can we let a gourd affect our good relationship? Oh, forget it. Let them have it.”

这一说，姜老公公也红了脸，连忙双手乱摇。“不不不，我们不能要。明明是你们种的么，还是物归原主，你们拿去吧。”

Mr. Jiang flushed at what Mr. Meng said. He shook his hands hurriedly, “No, we can’t. You planted it. You are its real owners. Keep it, please.”

两家正在相互推让，走过来一个过路人，一问，是这么回事，两手一拍，笑着对他们说：“好办好办，你们去拿把锯子来，当中一锯，一家一半，正好都可以拿来做个大瓢。”

While the two families were declining it, a man happened to pass by. On his inquiry, he learned the whole story. The man clapped his hands and said with laughter, “It’s simple. Fetch a saw here, please. Let’s cut it into halves so that both will have one part as a gourd ladle.”

孟家老公公拿来锯子，一锯，哎哟，怎么会渗出血来的呢？不行！不行！换个地方锯锯看，还是渗血。他们不敢锯了，只好



用手来掰，当当心心地掰，一掰两掰，只觉得眼前金光一闪，哈哈，有趣的事情又出来了。

Mr. Meng brought the saw and they got down to working. To their astonishment, the gourd began to bleed. They stopped at once and started again somewhere else. The same thing came about. They dared not saw it any more. Instead, they tried to break it off by hand. They did it as carefully as possible. A golden light dazzled them the moment the gourd split. Something fascinating happened.

原来这葫芦里没有瓢，却端端正正坐着一个白白胖胖的小姑娘。这小姑娘细细的眉毛，大大的眼睛，那眼睛水汪汪，亮晶晶的，正在滴溜溜地转，一张小脸粉嫩粉嫩，可爱极了！再一细看，小姑娘的手里还捧着一朵水灵灵的莲花。

They did not see vegetable sponge inside, but a charming baby girl sitting straight. On her delicate face, the girl wore fine eyebrows, under which two large and bright eyes were rolling left and right. What a lovely baby! Watch closely, they saw a fresh lotus being held in her hand.

过路人眨眨眼睛，又说话了：“你们两家不都还没有子女吗？你们看，小燕子报恩啦，给你们送了一个胖娃娃来。就让她做你们两家的女儿吧。姓两家的姓，取个名字就叫孟姜女。”

The passer-by blinked his eyes and then said, “Neither of







you has children, do you? It's obvious that the little swallow is paying a debt of gratitude by giving you a chubby child. I suggest you share her as your daughter, surnamed Meng Jiang, with Nu."

好了，自从孟家和姜家有了这个小姑娘，两家人家就都热闹起来。后来他们索性把当中的院墙一拆，两家并成一家，在一起过起了日子。

Since then, the two families were livened up by the little girl. They subsequently tore down the wall between their yards and lived harmoniously as one.

做了三朝做满月，做过百日做周岁，三周四岁下了地，五六七岁学针线。孟姜女一天天长大，真是毛头姑娘十八变，越变越漂亮，越变越聪明。亲戚朋友、隔壁邻居，人人见了都喜欢，两家老人更加是张开了嘴巴合不拢，走进走出都想笑。后来，家里又请了个绣花娘来，专门教孟姜女做女红。那个绣花娘不但会得挑花刺绣，而且读书识字，博古通今。孟姜女自从跟了这个绣花娘，不但心灵手巧，学会了各种手艺，而且还有了一肚子学问，知书达理，孝顺爹妈，真是才貌双全，好不了得。乡里乡亲的都在那里说，谁家小伙子要是娶了孟姜女做妻子，那可真是三把钥匙挂胸口，开心开心真开心的事情哪！

The baby grew so fast that she looked like a full-month baby when she was only three days old and her first birthday





was celebrated after one hundred days. At the age of three or four she was able to walk around. She began to learn needlework as early as five years old. As time went by, Meng Jiang Nu grew up and became a clever and beautiful girl. People around all liked her very much. The four old people from both families loved her even more dearly. They grinned from ear to ear all day long. Later, the two families hired a woman who was good at embroidery specially to teach Meng Jiang Nu needlework. The teacher was not only well versed in embroidery, but very learned and did well in reading and writing. As a smart and industrious girl, Meng Jing Nu mastered a variety of skills as well as rich knowledge from her teacher. She behaved well and took good care of her parents. In one word, she was such a good-looking and kind-hearted girl that all the people in the village agreed that whoever was able to marry Meng Jiang Nu, his happiness would be beyond description.



## 二、喜良逃难

### 2. The Escape of Wan Xiliang

孟姜女终于出落成了一个花容月貌、远近闻名的漂亮女子，两家的老人又忙碌起来，要张罗着替她找一个称心如意的好丈夫。

After Meng Jiang Nu grew up, her beauty was known far and wide. Her four parents were busy again. They were in search of a nice young man to be a most satisfactory husband of their dear daughter.

都知道孟姜女的丈夫叫万喜良，是个读书人。说起来，这个丈夫还是孟姜女自己找到的。他们两个人，当初怎么会认识的呢？这个故事要从秦始皇修长城说起。

As everyone knows, Meng Jiang Nu finally married a scholar named Wan Xiliang, who was said to be chosen by Meng Jiang Nu herself. The story that they got to know each other was related to the construction of the Great Wall, which was under the command of Emperor Qin Shihuang (the first emperor of Qin Dynasty).

那时候，秦始皇兵强马壮，雄心勃勃。不过，自从统一六国

