

Translation of a poem by Chen Lin

The water is cold. The water
will crack my horse's bones.

SEND BOTH BATTALIONS
UNDER YOUR COMMAND.

"We are men. Don't ship
us off to build that
damn wall. We would
rather die fighting."

OFFICIAL WORK MUST
NOT BE DELAYED. WE
WORK TO BRING ORDER.

The border is many young men. The home
is many widows. They open this letter:

"Marry again. Marry
now. Don't wait for
me. Remember: Show

respect for your new family.
And sometimes think of
your old husband out here."

After 2 months she wrote back. She asked me
how I could say such things. How could I?

"How could I ask you to
wait? If the baby is
a girl let her live.
If a boy - let him die."

You alone cannot see: Under the long wall
dead men's bones support dead men's bones.

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