奉陪鄭駙馬韋曲二首

I
韋曲花無賴，
家家惱殺人。
綠尊雖盡日，
白髮好禁春。
石角鉤衣破，
藤枝刺眼新。
何時占叢竹，
頭戴小烏巾。

II
野寺垂楊裏，
春畦亂水間。
美花多映竹，
好鳥不歸山。
城郭終何事，
風塵豈駐顏。
誰能共公子，
薄暮欲俱還。
3.1–2

Respectfully Accompanying Escort Zheng in Weiqu

I

In Weiqu the flowers are heartless flirts,
at every home they drive people crazy.
Though with goblets of green we may pass the day,²
4 can white hair well resist spring?
Corners of rock hook and tear clothes,
wisteria branches fresh, poking eyes.
When shall we occupy the clumps of bamboo,
8 wearing small black scarves on our heads?³

II

Wilderness temple in the weeping willows,
spring garden-plots among disorderly streams.
Lovely flowers, often set off by bamboo,
4 the fine birds won’t return to the hills.
In the end why be in the city?
in that windblown dust how can youth’s complexion stay?
Who can join a young lord like yourself
8 to go back together towards sunset?

¹ Weiqu, the “Wei Lanes,” was an aristocratic area of villas near Chang’an.
² Lü 綠, “green,” ale, so called because it is filled with dark (“green”) lees.
³ Worn by recluses.
3.3–7

重過何氏五首

I

問訊東橋竹，
將軍有報書。
倒衣還命駕，
高枕乃吾廬。
花妥鶯捎蝶，
溪喧獺趁魚。
重來休沐地，
真作野人居。

II

山雨樽仍在，
沈沙榻未移。
犬迎曾宿客，
鴉護落巢兒。
雲薄翠微寺，
天清黃子陂。
向來幽興極，
步屣過東籬。
3.3–7
Revisiting General He’s

I
I asked about the bamboo of the eastern bridge,
and the general wrote a letter in reply.
I threw on my clothes inside out and ordered a carriage,
resting in peace here, it is indeed “my own cottage.”¹
Flowers secure, orioles brush past butterflies,
the brook raises a din, otters chase fish.
Coming again to this place where he spends his days off,
truly I dwell here as a rustic.

II
Goblets still there in the mountain rain,
sinking in sand, the benches not moved.
The dog greets the visitor who once stayed here,
a crow guards its child, fallen from the nest.
Clouds thin out over Azure Mist Temple,
the sky is clear over Huangzi Slope.
My excitement in seclusion just reached its peak,
as my sandals stroll past the eastern hedge.

¹ Echoing *Tao Qian, who “loved his own cottage” as the birds loved their roosts.
III

落日平臺上，
春風啜茗時。

石欄斜點筆，
桐葉坐題詩。

翡翠鳴衣桁，
蜻蜒立釣絲。

自今幽興熟，
來往亦無期。

IV

頗怪朝參懶，
應耽野趣長。

雨拋金鎖甲，
苔臥綠沈槍。

手自移蒲柳，
家纔足稻粱。

看君用幽意，
白日到羲皇。

V

到此應常宿，
相留可判年。
III

Setting sun over the level terrace,
spring breeze at the moment of sipping tea.
At the stone railing I dip my brush aslant,
4 I sit writing poems on paulownia leaves.
   Kingfishers sing on the clothes-racks,
   dragonflies stand on the fishing line.
   From this moment my zest at seclusion is complete,
8 and there also will be no set times for coming or going.

IV

I rather marvel at your laxness in attending court—
it must be your addiction to prolonging your rustic delights.
Your metal chain armor, cast off in the rain,
4 on the moss reposes your green lacquer spear.
   With your own hand you transplant water-willow,
   your household has just enough rice.
   I watch how, through your secluded state of mind,
8 in broad daylight you reach the days of Fuxi. 1

V

Coming here one should abide constantly,
lingering, one could well spend a year.

---

1 A sage-king of antiquity, a time of perfect simplicity.
蹉跎暮容色，
悵望好林泉。  
何路霑微祿，
歸山買薄田。  
斯遊恐不遂，
把酒意茫然。

3.8–9

陪諸貴公子丈八溝攜妓納涼晚際遇雨

I

落日放船好，
輕風生浪遲。  
竹深留客處，
荷淨納涼時。  
公子調冰水，
佳人雪藕絲。  
片雲頭上黑，
應是雨催詩。

II

雨來沾席上，
風急打船頭。
Time slips away, twilight’s countenance,
sadly I gaze on these fine woods and streams.
What route to enjoy a meager salary
that I can return to the hills and buy poor fields?
I suspect I will never fulfill such a journey,
ale in hand, my thoughts are a daze.

3.8–9

Taking Singing Girls to Enjoy the Cool at Yard Eight Canal in the Company of Various Noble Gentlemen: On the Verge of Evening
It Rained

I

It is fine to go boating in the setting sun,
the light breeze is slow to raise ripples.
The bamboo is deep, with places that detain the guests,
lotuses washed clean, the moment we enjoy the cool.
The young nobles flavor iced waters,
the fair women pull off lotus tendrils.
Then a patch of cloud grows black overhead—
the rain will surely hurry our poems’ completion.

II

Rain comes soaking the party mats,
winds blow hard, slapping the prows.
越女红裙湿，
燕姬翠黛愁。
缆侵堤柳繋，
幔卷浪花浮。
归路翻萧飒，
陂塘五月秋。

3.10

醉时歌

诸公衮衮登台省，
广文先生官独冷。

甲第纷纷厭粱肉，
广文先生饭不足。

先生有道出羲皇，
先生有才过屈宋。
德尊一代常坎軻，
名垂万古知何用。

杜陵野客人更嗤，
被褐短窄鬓如丝。
日糴太倉五升米，
时赴郑老同襟期。
The red skirts of Yue girls are soaked,
the azure kohl of Yan wenches is forlorn.
Moorings are fastened to willows up on the bank,
curtains rolled up, wave-spume drifts.
On the way back it turns to a whooshing chill—
in the basin, fall in midsummer.

3.10

Song When Drunk

A stream of distinguished men rises to the censorate and ministries,
while this gentleman of the Guangwen College alone holds a sinecure.  
The best mansions throng with people, sated with meat and fine rice,
while this gentleman of the Guangwen College has not enough to eat.
This gentleman possesses the Way going beyond Fu Xi; this gentleman possesses talents surpassing Qu Yuan and Song Yu.
His virtue, revered by the whole age, yet his aims are always unfulfilled,
his name will endure for all time, but I wonder what good that does.
As a rustic from Duling people scorn me even more:
the homespun I wear is short and tight; my locks are like white silk.
Every day I purchase my five pints of rice from the Official Granary,
then often go to old Zheng’s, to meet someone like-minded.

---

1 Original note: “Presented to the Academician Zheng Qian of the Guangwen College” 贈廣文館博士鄭虔.
2 Lengguan 冷官, translated as “sinecure,” was an office that was neither important nor involved much work. The Guangwen College, reserved for skilled stylists, had been added to the Imperial Academy in the Tianbao.
3 One of the sage-kings of high antiquity.
4 The famous poets of Chu from the third century B.C.
得钱即相觅，
沽酒无复疑。
忘形到尔汝，
痛饮真吾师。

清夜沈沈动春酌，
镫前细雨簷花落。
但觉高歌有鬼神，
焉知饿死填溝壑。

相如逸才亲涤器，
子云识字终投阁。

先生早赋归去来，
石田茅屋荒苍苔。
儒术於我何有哉，
孔丘盗跖俱尘埃。
不须闻此意惨怆，
生前相遇且衔杯。

3.11

城西陂泛舟

青蛾皓齿在楼船，
横笛短箫悲远天。
Whenever I get cash, I seek him out at once
and buy ale without hesitation.
Ignoring formalities, we come to tutoyer;\(^1\)
in drinking oneself silly you are truly my teacher.

As cool night engulfs us, we set the spring brew pouring;
before the lamp in a fine rain flowers fall past the eaves.
We are aware only that in our loud singing there is some divinity—
what do we care about dying of hunger and filling some ditch?
Xiangru had unworldly talent, yet washed dishes with his own hands;\(^2\)
Ziyun knew his characters, but at last he jumped from the tower.\(^3\)

Long before, this gentleman wrote his verses on returning home
to stony fields and a thatched roof, overgrown with green moss.
What do the skills of a Confucian scholar matter to me?—
Confucius and Robber Zhi are together now the dust.\(^4\)
One must not hear such thoughts so gloomy—
chancing to meet in this life, let's lift the cups to our lips.

*Because of the bad harvest of 753, due to heavy rain, the government sold rice at a reduced price to poor people, but kept the allotment low to prevent hoarding. By mentioning that he goes to visit Zheng Qian 鄭虔 after buying his rice ration, Du Fu places himself among the poor, unlike those “sated with meat and fine rice.”*

\(^{3.11}\)

**Boating on the Reservoir West of the City**

Dark brows and gleaming teeth are here on this towered barge,
transverse flutes and short pipes lend sadness to distant skies.

---

\(^1\) The use of informal pronouns.
\(^2\) *Sima Xiangru.*
\(^3\) *Yang Xiong.*
\(^4\) The notorious Robber Zhi appears in the *Zhuangzi* as Confucius's Daoist antagonist.
渼陂行
春风自信牙樯动，
迟日徐看锦缆牵。
鱼吹细浪摇歌扇，
燕蹴飞花落舞筵。
不有小舟能荡桨，
百壶那送酒如泉。

3.12
渼陂行
岑参兄弟皆好奇，
携我远来游渼陂。
天地黮惨忽异色，
波涛万顷堆琉璃。
琉璃汗漫泛舟入，
事殊兴极忧思集。
鼍作鲸吞不复知，
恶风白浪何嗟及。

主人锦帆相为开，
舟子喜甚无氛埃。
凫鷖散乱櫂謒发，
丝管啁啾空翠来。
In spring breeze we let the ivory mast move as it will,
through the drawn-out day we watch slowly the brocade cables pull.
Fish puff tiny waves that shake the singers’ fans,
swallows kick through wind-borne petals that fall on dancing mats.
Had we not smaller boats to skillfully ply their oars,
how could we bring the hundred jugs of ale that flows like fountains?

3.12

Meipi: A Ballad

Cen Shen and his brother both love marvels,
they brought me here afar to visit Lake Meipi.
Earth and sky were somber and gloomy, their colors suddenly changed:
ten thousand acres of rippling waves, massed lapis lazuli.
Lapis lazuli stretched endlessly, our boat set sail thereon,
the experience strange, elation peaked, then anxious thoughts gathered.
The alligator rising or boat-swallowing whale are known no more,
but if adverse winds come and white-capped waves, it will be too late
for regrets.

My host’s brocade sails are spread for me,
the boatman is utterly happy, there is no dust in the air.
Ducks and gulls scatter wildly as the rowing chant begins,
the warbling notes of strings and pipes come through the azure mist.

---

1 In reflection.
渼陂西南臺

沈竿續縵深莫測，
菱葉荷花淨如拭。
宛在中流瀲澥清，
下歸無極終南黑。

半陂已南純浸山，
動影褌宛沖融間。
船舷暝戛雲際寺，
水面月出藍田關。

此時驪龍亦吐珠，
馮夷擊鼓群龍趨。
湘妃漢女出歌舞，
金支翠旗光有無。

咫尺但愁雷雨至，
蒼茫不曉神靈意。

少壯幾時奈老何，
向來哀樂何其多。

3.13

渼陂西南臺

高臺面蒼陂，
六月風日冷。
By depth pole or measuring line its depths have never been fathomed, water-nut leaves and lotus blossoms, as clean as if scrubbed. Now we are right in mid-water, it is clear as the Gulf of Bo,\textsuperscript{1} receding downward endlessly is the blackness of Mount Zhongnan.

The southern half of the reservoir is purely soaking the mountain, whose stirred reflections shimmer quivering amid the sloshing. The boat’s sides in the darkness bump into Edge-of-the-Clouds Temple,\textsuperscript{2} on the water’s surface the moon comes out over Indigo Fields Pass.

At this moment the Pitch-black Dragon is spitting forth its pearl,\textsuperscript{3} Pingyi beats the drum and herds of dragons scurry.\textsuperscript{4} The Xiang Consorts and Han Maidens come forth to sing and dance,\textsuperscript{5} golden poles and kingfisher banners, their light in half-presence.

A short distance ahead I worry only that thunderstorms will come, in the vast expanse I do not grasp the intention of the god.

How long does youth last? we cannot help but grow old; it has ever been that sorrow and joy come so often!

---

\textbf{3.13}

The Terrace Southwest of Meipi

The high terrace faces the gray-green embankments, in the sixth month the weather is chilly.

---

\textsuperscript{1} The ocean off the northeastern coast.

\textsuperscript{2} In reflection.

\textsuperscript{3} The “Pitch-black (Li) Dragon” was said to have a precious pearl under its jaw. Here it is a figure for the moon rising over Lantian (Indigo Fields) seen in reflection.

\textsuperscript{4} Pingyi was a waster deity.

\textsuperscript{5} The “Xiang Consorts” are the goddesses of the River Xiang; the “Han Maidens” were nymphs of the Han River.
蒹葭離披去，
天水相與永。
懷新目似擊，
接要心已領。　
仿像識鮫人，
空濛辨魚艇。
錯磨終南翠，
顛倒白閣影。
崷崒增光輝，
乘陵惜俄頃。
勞生愧嚴鄭，
外物慕張邴。
世復輕驊騮，
吾甘雜蛙黾。
知歸俗可忽，
取適事莫并。
身退豈待官，
老來苦便靜。
況資菱芡足，
庶結茅茨逕。
從此具扁舟，
彌年逐清景。
Reeds and rushes have gone off in tatters,
now heavens and waters join in endlessness.
Thinking on freshness, my eyes are as if struck,
gathering the essentials, the mind already comprehends.
I recognize mermen in vague semblance,
I make out a fishing skiff in a hazy blur.
Grinding and polishing Mount Zhongnan’s azure,
inverting White Tower in reflection.¹
It increases the glow of what looms so high,
I regret there is only a moment to mount the slope.
Belabored by life, I am ashamed before Yan and Zheng,²
I admire Zhang and Bing in placing things beyond them.³
This age also has contempt for the Hualiu steed,
so I am willing to mingle with frogs and bullfrogs.
Knowing when to go home, the common may be ignored,
nothing can match the choice of what suits one’s nature.
Why wait to get office to withdraw from public life?—
getting older, I’m intensely drawn to comfortable quiet.
Better to be supplied with plenty of water-nuts and euryale,
I will perhaps make a thatched dwelling in this remote spot.
From this point on I will ready a tiny boat
and, to the fullness of my years, pursue the clear scene.

¹ One of the peaks in the Qinling Range.
² *Yan Junping; *Zheng Pu; that is, recluses.
³ Zhang Zhongwei and Bing Manrong, two Han recluses.
與鄠縣源大少府宴渼陂(得寒字)

應為西陂好，
金錢罄一餐。
飯抄雲子白，
瓜嚼水精寒。
無計回船下，
空愁避酒難。
主人情爛熳，
持答翠琅玕。

贈田九判官

崆峒使節上青霄，
河隴降王款聖朝。
宛馬總肥春苜蓿，
將軍只數漢嫖姚。
陳留阮瑀誰爭長，
京兆田郎早見招。
3.14

Feasting at Meipi with District Defender of Hu County, Yuan Senior
(I got the rhyme *han*)

It must have been because the Western Reservoir is so fine
that you used up your cash on a single meal.
For rice we spooned “cloud-seed” white,¹
for melon we chewed the cold of crystal.
With no plans to turn the boat and get off,
I worry only that it will be hard to resist the ale.
My host’s sentiments are so extravagant,
by this I answer your blue-green agate.²

3.15

To Administrative Assistant Tian Liangqiu (9)

The Commandant of the Kongtong Range rises to the blue empyrean,³
a surrendered prince of He and Long pledges faith to our sage court.⁴
Ferghana horses all get fat on springtime clover,
our general can be counted as none other than Han’s Swift
Commander.⁵
Who can compete in excellence with our Ruan Yu of Chenliu?—⁶
Master Tian of the capital was still earlier summoned.⁷

---

¹ A diet of immortals made of fragmented mica, here simply the whiteness of the
rice, perhaps the name of local rice.
² That is, the poem answer’s Yuan’s poem.
³ Geshu Han. “Rising to the blue empyrean” plays on the height of the mountains
and coming to court.
⁴ The King of the Tuyuhun has surrendered to Geshu Han.
⁵ The famous Western Han general *Huo Qubing.*
⁶ Ruan Yu of Chenliu, one of the “Seven Masters of the Jian’an,” served Cao Cao
(155–220) in his military headquarters. Ruan here stands for Gao Shi, who
had served at Fengqiu near Chenliu, who was then a secretary in Geshu Han’s
headquarters.
⁷ Here Tian is compared to an earlier Tian, Tian Feng 田鳳, whose deportment was
such that Han Lingdi (r. 168–189 CE) would follow him with his eyes.
麾下賴君才併入，
8 獨能無意向漁樵。

3.16

投贈哥舒開府二十韻

今代麒麟閣，
何人第一功。
君王自神武，
4 駕馭必英雄。
開府當朝傑，
論兵邁古風。
先鋒百戰在，
8 略地兩隅空。
青海無傳箭，
天山早掛弓。
廉頗仍走敵，
8 魏絳已和戎。
Under his standards relying on you, all talents will join—¹
in my case alone can you have no intention to face fishermen and
woodcutters?²

After the defeat of the Tuyuhun in 754, Geshu Han sent Tian Liangqiu to
the capital to announce the victory to Xuanzong.

3.16

Presented to Commander Geshu: Twenty Couplets

In the Unicorn Gallery of this age³
what person is first in merit?
Our ruler is divinely warlike himself,
and always has heroes to hitch to his team.
The Commander stands out in our present reign,
his study of warfare outstrips ancient modes.
Our vanguard general has survived a hundred battles,
conquering territory, these two corners are stripped bare.⁴
No arrows are passed on by Kokonor,⁵
in the Heaven Mountains bows were early put away.
Lian Po can still send the enemy running,⁶
Wei Jiang has already made peace with the foreign tribes.⁷

---

¹ That is, seeing Tian Liangqiu, everyone will want to join Geshu Han’s command.
² That is, to turn his attention to Du Fu and recommend him.
³ The Unicorn Gallery what where Han Xuandi had the portraits of meritorious
officers painted.
⁴ This refers to territory previously under Tibetan control, though there is disagree-
ment on which territories these are.
⁵ “Passing on arrows” is probably a sign of the alarms of war.
⁶ *Lian Po.
⁷ Wei Jiang belonged to the state of Jin in the Spring and Autumn Annals period and
persuaded Duke Dao to make peace with the non-Chinese peoples.
每惜河湟棄，
新兼節制通。
智謀垂睿想，
出入冠諸公。

日月低秦樹，
乾坤繞漢宮。
胡人愁逐北，
宛馬又從東。

受命邊沙遠，
歸來御席同。
軒墀曾寵鶴，
畋獵舊非熊。

茅土加名數，
山河誓始終。
策行遺戰伐，
契合動昭融。

勳業青冥上，
交親氣概中。
未為珠履客，
已見白頭翁。
Everyone regretted that the He and Huang region had been abandoned,¹
recently you received the added office of Commissioner, reconnecting it.²
Sagacious in planning, you have received imperial regard,
entering and leaving court, you crown all other lords.
Sun and moon linger on Qin’s trees,
Heaven and Earth surround the palace of Han.
The Hu grieve at having been pursued in defeat,
Ferghana horses once again come east.
You get your mandate far on frontier sands,
coming back, you share the imperial mat.
On the palace stairs he has favored his crane,³
but on the hunt it was formerly “not a bear” that was caught.⁴
To the reed-bound soil he added a count of names,⁵
by Yellow River and Mount Tai the vow was made forever.⁶
Your policies enacted, you will leave aside warfare,
perfect accord stirs his lasting radiance.
The legacy of your achievements is above the dark heavens,
forming close friends is in your temperament.
I am not your client with pearl slippers,⁷
you see me already a white-haired old man.

¹ This area between the Huang River and the Yellow River had been ceded to the Tibetans in Ruizong’s reign as provision for the Jincheng Princess, who had been married to the Tibetan king.
² In 754 Geshu Han was made Military Commissioner of Hexi and Duke of Liang; in that same year he defeated the Tibetans.
³ This refers to Duke Yi of Wei’s pet crane, which rode with him in his carriage. The usage here suggests the favor that Geshu Han enjoyed.
⁴ *Taigong.
⁵ In the enfeoffment ceremony, soil from the altars of earth and grains was bound in reeds and presented; the “count of names” was the tax income of five hundred households.
⁶ When enfeoffing his meritorious followers, Liu Bang, the founder of the Han dynasty, vowed that they would hold their fiefs until the Yellow River and Mount Tai changed.
⁷ This refers to the Lord of Chunshen’s retainers who wore pearled slippers as a mark of the lord’s favor.
寄高三十五書記

壯節初題柱，
生涯獨轉蓬。
幾年春草歇，
今日暮途窮。
軍事留孫楚，
行間識呂蒙。
防身一長劍，
將欲倚崆峒。

3.17

寄高三十五書記

歎惜高生老，
新詩日又多。
美名人不及，
佳句法如何。
主將收才子，
崆峒足凱歌。
聞君已朱紱，
且得慰蹉跎。
My bold principles at first inscribed a pillar,\(^1\)
in life’s course, a solitary dandelion puff tossed in air.
How many years have spring plants withered?—
and now my twilight road is at an end.
For military matters you keep Sun Chu,\(^2\)
among the ranks you recognize Lü Meng.\(^3\)
To protect myself I have a long sword,
I would want to rest it against Kongtong Mountain.\(^4\)

*In this fulsome praise of the commander of the northwestern armies, Geshu Han, Du Fu is seeking a post in the military, like his friend Gao Shi.*

\(3.17\)

To Secretary Gao (35)

I give a sigh that Master Gao is old,
yet with each passing day new poems increase.
No other can match his excellent fame,
what is the technique of his fine lines?
The grand general has garnered a talent,
in the Kongtong Range are ample victory songs.\(^5\)
When I hear that you have received the red cord,\(^6\)
it will console my own stumbling career.

---

1 When “Sima Xiangru left Chengdu for Chang’an he inscribed a pillar with the words: “I will never pass over this bridge again unless driving a four-horse team [the mark of a governor].”
2 Sun Chu (d. 293) was employed by a general; Du Fu seems to be referring to his friends in Geshu Han’s service.
3 Lü Meng was raised to become a Wu general during the Three Kingdoms.
4 A mountain in Longyou and here referring to Geshu Han’s command and perhaps a figure for the greatness of Geshu Han himself. Du Fu seems to be asking for a position in the army.
5 Geshu Han’s command.
6 A mark of office of the fifth grade or above.
3.18

送張十二參軍赴蜀州因呈楊五侍御

好去張公子，
通家別恨添。
兩行秦樹直，
萬點蜀山尖。
御史新驄馬，
參軍舊紫髯。
皇華吾善處，
於汝定無嫌。

3.19

贈陳二補闕

世儒多汩沒，
夫子獨聲名。
獻納開東觀，
君王問長卿。
皁雕寒始急，
天馬老能行。
自到青冥裏，
休看白髮生。
3.18

Seeing Off Adjutant Zhang (12) on His Way to Shu, Consequently to Be Shown to Censor Yang (5)

Fare thee well, young lord Zhang,
parting’s resentment is even greater for old family friends.¹
In two rows, Qin’s trees are straight,²
ten thousand points, Shu mountains sharp.
The censor has new dappled gray,³
the adjutant, purplish whiskers as before.⁴
He of “glorious splendor” has treated me well,⁵
he will certainly have no dislike of you.

3.19

Presented to Chen (2), Rectifier of Omissions

Scholars of the age are mostly sunk in obscurity,
but you alone, sir, are renowned.
For presenting petitions they opened the Eastern Lodge,⁶
and our lord and ruler asked about Changqing.⁷
The coal-black hawk first grows keen in the cold,
the horse of Heaven, old, can still travel.
In due course you will reach the Blue Darkness,⁸
so cease to watch your white hairs appear.

¹ Presumably Censor Yang.
² That is, trees lining the road.
³ Because the Eastern Han censor Huan Dian rode a dappled gray, it became metonymy for a censor. This refers to Yang.
⁴ Associated with Xi Chao, the adjutant of Huan Wen in the Eastern Jin.
⁵ “Glorious splendor,” from the Lesser Odes, “Huanghuangzhe hua” 皇皇者華, praising a man in service, came to stand for an official in service, here Yang.
⁶ This was a library in the Eastern Han, which Han Hedi (r. 89–106 CE) visited and selected worthy scholars.
⁷ *Sima Xiangru.
⁸ A figure for the heights of the court.
病後過王倚飲贈歌

麟角鳳觜世莫識，
煎膠續弦奇自見。
尚看王生抱此懷，
在於甫也何由羨。
且過王生慰疇昔，
素知賤子甘貧賤。
酷見凍餒不足恥，
多病沈年苦無健。
王生怪我顏色惡，
答云伏枕艱難遍。
瘧癘三秋孰可忍，
寒熱百日相交戰。
頭白眼暗坐有胝，
肉黃皮皺命如線。
惟生哀我未平復，
為我力致美殽膳。
遣人向市賒香粳，
喚婦出房親自饌。
長安冬葅酸且綠，
金城土酥淨如練。
After Being Sick, I Stopped By Wang Yi’s House to Drink and Presented Him This Song

The world does not take much note of unicorn horn and phoenix beak, but when boiled to glue to repair a string their wonder shows itself. One also sees that Master Wang harbors such inner qualities—

but as for me, Du Fu, what is there to admire? Stopping awhile by Master Wang’s soothes feelings I have long felt, he has ever known that this humble fellow accepts poverty and low station.

You grasped quite well that hunger and cold cannot make me ashamed, yet having been so sick for the whole year leaves me terribly infirm. Master Wang marveled at how bad my complexion was; I answered that I had been bedridden, with troubles of all kinds. Who could bear, all autumn long, malarial fever?—

for a hundred days burning and chills warred within me. My hair turned white, my eyes were dim, next scabby boils formed, my flesh was jaundiced, my skin wrinkled up, my fate hung by a thread. Only you, sir, felt sorry for me, that I was not restored to health, and on my behalf you made efforts to send fine and delicate foods. You sent someone to the market to buy scented rice, you called your wife out of her chambers to prepare it for me herself. In Chang’an the winter pickles are sour and green, the local yogurt of Jincheng is as pure as white silk.
兼求奢豪且剖鲜，
密沽斗酒谐终宴。
故人情义晚谁似，
令我手脚轻欲旋。
老马为驹信不虚，
当时得意况深眷。
但使残年饱喫饭，
只愿无事常相见。

3.21

送裴二虯作尉永嘉

孤嶼亭何处，
天涯水气中。
故人官就此，
绝境兴谁同。
隐吏逢梅福，
遊山憶謝公。
扁舟吾已僦，
把釣待秋風。
You also went to get a pig and had fresh meat cut, and privately bought a gallon of ale to bring cheer throughout the feast. The nobility and affection of my old friend is unmatched by any, it makes my hands and feet so light they are ready to spin. “The old horse thinks itself a colt”—this is true and not baseless; at the moment I feel satisfied, and even more feel your deep affection. If only in my remaining years I can eat my fill, I wish only to have no problems and always to meet with you.

3.21

Seeing Off Pei Qiu (2) to Take His Post as Sheriff in Yongjia

Where is the pavilion of the “solitary mountain isle”?— on the horizon, amid the vapors over the water. My old friend goes to this place as an official, who will share your elation at its supreme scenes? Among recluse clerks you will meet Mei Fu, roaming the mountains, you will recall Lord Xie. I have already hired a tiny boat, awaiting autumn’s wind to take my tackle in hand.

---

1 A phrase from “Hornbow” in the *Classic of Poetry*.
2 The poet Xie Lingyun (385–433, “Lord Xie” of line six, held a post at Yongjia and wrote a famous poem on this site.
3 A sheriff at Nanchang at the end of the Western Han. When Wang Mang usurped the Han throne, he fled to become a recluse at Guiji and later became an immortal.
4 *Zhang Han.*
3.22

贈獻納使起居田舍人澄

獻納司存雨露邊，
地分清切任才賢。
舍人退食收封事，
宮女開函近御筵。
曉漏追趨青瑣闥，
晴窗點檢白雲篇。
揚雄更有河東賦，
唯待吹噓送上天。

3.23

崔駒馬山亭宴集

蕭史幽棲地，
林間蹋鳳毛。
洑流何處入，
亂石閉門高。
客醉揮金碗，
詩成得繡袍。
清秋多宴會，
終日困香醪。
3.22

Presented to Tian Cheng, Petition Box Commissioner and Imperial Diarist

You carry out your duties for petitions beside the “rain and dew,” its location, pure and close, employing talents and worthy men. The Diarist declines his meals and receives sealed submissions; palace women open the cases and bring them to the imperial seat. With morning’s waterclock you rush after others to the blue chain-patterned gate, in a sunlit window you check over white-cloud writings. Again a Yang Xiong has a “Hedong Poetic Exposition” — waiting only for your praise on my behalf to send it up to Heaven.

3.23

A Banquet at Escort Cui’s Mountain Pavilion

Where Xiaoshi lodges in seclusion one treads on phoenix down in the woods. From where did the subterranean current enter? — tangled rock hides your gate on high. The guests are drunk, waving their golden cups, when a poem is done, one gets an embroidered gown. In clear autumn there are many banquets, all day long I am queasy with fragrant brew.

---

1 That is, near the imperial presence.
2 Han Wudi composed a verse on “The Autumn Wind” mentioning white clouds; Tian Cheng is evidently checking imperial verses.
3 *Yang Xiong. A famous fu by Yang Xiong, here standing for Du Fu’s own fu presented to the throne.
4 *Nongyu.
示從孫濟

平明跨驢出，
未知適誰門。
權門多噂沓，
且復尋諸孫。
諸孫貧無事，
宅舍如荒村。
堂前自生竹，
堂後自生萱。
萱草秋已死，
竹枝霜不蕃。
淘米少汲水，
汲多井水渾。
刈葵莫放手，
放手傷葵根。
阿翁懶惰久，
覺兒行步奔。
所來為宗族，
亦不為盤飧。
小人利口實，
薄俗難可論。
3.24

To Be Shown to My Nephew Ji

At daybreak I set forth on my donkey, not knowing to whose gate I would go. At the gates of the mighty there is much back-biting, so instead I went to find my grand-nephew. My nephew is poor and has nothing to do, your abode is like an untended village. Before your hall bamboo grow wild, behind your hall the daylilies grow wild. The daylilies have already died in autumn, your bamboo branches do not flourish in frost. Draw only a little water from the well to wash rice, if much is drawn, the well-water muddies. In cutting mallows don’t be careless; if careless, you harm the mallows’ roots. This old fellow has long been lazy, the youngster seems to walk at a run. I have come because of family and not for the sake of a meal. The lesser man finds advantage in stuff for the mouth, such unfeeling customs should not be considered.
勿受外嫌猜，
同姓古所敦。

九日寄岑參
出門復入門，
雨腳但如舊。
所向泥活活，
思君令人瘦。
沈吟坐西軒，
飲食錯昏晝。
寸步曲江頭，
難為一相就。
吁嗟乎蒼生，
稼穡不可救。
安得誅雲師，
疇能補天漏。
大明韜日月，
曠野號禽獸。
君子強逶迤，
小人困馳騖。
維南有崇山，
恐與川浸溜。
Do not take the suspicions of outsiders—
those of the same surname have always been honored.

*Seeking out wealthy and remote relatives to visit and be treated to a free meal seems to have been common practice. Here it seems that Du Ji (or someone in his family) has suggested to Du Fu that he has visited only because he wants to be fed. In the closing Du Fu protests—perhaps too much—that this was not his purpose.*

3.25

On the Double Ninth: to Cen Shen

Out the gate, then in the gate again,
there were only raindrops, as before.
Wherever I turn, I slosh in the mud,
4 thinking of you makes me grow gaunt.
I sit on the western porch brooding,
confusing daylight and dusk in my meals.
The Twisting River is just a step away,
8 yet it’s hard to get to go there even once.
Alas indeed for the common folk—
the harvest cannot be saved.
How can I get to execute the Cloud-master!—
12 long ago leaks in the heavens could be mended.¹
The great lights, sun and moon, have been sheathed;
in the vast wilds birds and beasts cry out.
Gentlemen force themselves to meander ahead,
16 ordinary folk have trouble to hurry along.
Directly south is a lofty mountain,
I fear it will be washed away with the river.

¹ When the vault of Heaven cracked, the goddess Nüwa mended them.
是節東籬菊，
紛披為誰秀。
岑生多新詩，
性亦嗜醇酎。
采采黃金花，
何由滿衣袖。

3.26

歎庭前甘菊花
簷前甘菊移時晚，
青蕊重陽不堪摘。
明日蕭條醉盡醒，
殘花爛熳開何益。
籬邊野外多眾芳，
采擷細瑣升中堂。
念茲空長大枝葉，
結根失所纏風霜。
On this festival the chrysanthemums by the eastern hedge
will spread in profusion, splendid for whom?
Master Cen has many recent poems,
and his nature is addicted to strong ale as well.
As for those golden flowers flourishing so,
how can we fill the sleeves of our gowns?

This and the following poems were from the rainy autumn of 754, which ruined the harvest and caused a famine in Chang’an. Too much rain was commonly interpreted as too much Yin (feminine) influence in the body politic. When Xuanzong worried that the rain would harm the harvest, the Minister Yang Guozhong, who had come to power as a relation of Xuanzong’s favorite, Lady Yang, was supposed to have shown the emperor wholesome grain, assuring him that there was nothing to worry about. In such a context a figurative reading of lines 11–14 would have easily come to mind.

3.26
Sighing Over the Sweet Chrysanthemums in the Yard

Sweet chrysanthemums before my eaves, transplanted too late,
on the Double Ninth I couldn’t bring myself to pick their green blooms.
The next day in the dreary, whistling winds I sober up entirely;
their last flowers rich with color blossom to what end?
Beside the hedge and in the wilds are many fragrant flowers,
gathering the least of these in gown’s folds they are brought into the hall.
I brood how these plants in vain grew large in branch and leaf—
they put down roots in the wrong place, surrounded by wind and frost.
承沈大叔東美除膳部員外，阻雨未遂駕，奉寄此詩

今日西京掾，
多除南省郎。
通家惟沈氏，
謁帝似馮唐。
詩律群公問，
儒門舊史長。
清秋便寓直，
列宿頓輝光。
未暇申宴慰，
含情空激揚。
司存何所比，
膳部默淒傷。
貧賤人事略，
經過霖潦妨。
禮同諸父長，
恩豈布衣忘。
天路牽騏驥，
雲臺引棟樑。
徒懷貢公喜，
飄飄鬢毛蒼。
Sir Shen Dongmei (8) Has Been Made Vice-Director of the Catering Bureau; Because of the Rain I Wasn’t Able to Gallop Off to Congratulate Him So I Respectfully Sent This Poem

Today many administrators in the Western Capital were made vice-directors in the Ministry of Rites;\(^1\)
But for family friends across generations, there is only Shen,\(^2\)
who pays his respects to the emperor like Feng Tang.\(^3\)
All gentlemen ask him about poetry’s rules,
a scholar household, his strength is knowing the former histories.
In clear autumn it is fitting that he stay nights in the palace,
the constellation at once casts its glow.\(^4\)
I had no time to extend my felicitations,
I held back my feelings, my excitement in vain.
What can be compared to your charge?—
but the Catering Bureau leaves me in silent sorrow.\(^5\)
For one poor and humble, politeness is abridged,
I was prevented by heavy rain from stopping by.
The courtesy due is with seniors of my father’s generation,
how could this commoner forget your kind grace?
A fine steed is led to Heaven’s roads,
a roof-beam is brought to Cloud Terrace.
In vain I harbor Lord Gong’s delight,\(^6\)
but wind-ruffled, the hair at my temples is gray.

\(^1\) Original note: “Four personnel of the bureau were made vice-directors on the same day” 府掾四人, 同日拜郎.
\(^2\) Shen Dongmei was the son of the poet Shen Quanqi (c.656–c.716), who had been a friend of Du Fu’s grandfather, Du Shenyan.
\(^3\) Having served in three reigns, Feng Tang was finally appointed court gentleman (lang) at the age of ninety in the reign of Han Wudi. Shen Dongmei was evidently elderly when he received this promotion.
\(^4\) The stars that correspond to the office of lang, “vice-director.”
\(^5\) Because Du Fu’s grandfather held that post.
\(^6\) *Gong Yu.
苦雨奉寄隴西公兼呈王徵士

今秋乃淫雨，
仲月來寒風。
群木水光下，
4 万象雲氣中。
所思礙行潦，
九里信不通。
悄悄素滻路，
8 迢迢天漢東。
願騰六尺馬，
背若孤征鴻。
劃見公子面，
12 超然歡笑同。
奮飛既胡越，
局促傷樊籠。
一飯四五起，
16 憑軒心力窮。
嘉蔬沒溷濁，
時菊碎榛叢。
鷹隼亦屈猛，
20 鳥騫何所蒙。
3.28

The Misery of the Rains: Respectfully Sent to the Duke of Longxi, and
Also Presented to Summoned Scholar Wang

This autumn is indeed one of flooding rains,
in the mid-autumn month the cold wind came.
Hosts of trees are under a watery light,
images of all things lie amid cloudy vapor.
The man on my mind is blocked by streaming runoff,
even nine leagues away no letter gets through.
Gloomy and silent, the road by the pale Chan,
east of the River of Stars lies remote.
I want to make my six-foot horse bound forward,
its back is like being on a lone-faring swan,
and abruptly to meet my prince face to face,
and escaping this all, to share laughter and joy.
But to fly off, we are as far as Hu and Yue,
cramped up, I lament being in cage and pen.
I rise four or five times at every meal,
My fine vegetables are buried in the muck,
the season’s chrysanthemums are shattered among clumps of brush.
Even hawks and falcons curb their fierceness,
what do the ravens and kites get for their effort?

1 Original note: “The Duke of Longxi is [Li] Yu, [later] Prince of Hanzhong; the Summoned Scholar is Wang Zhe of Langya” 隴西公即漢中王瑀, 徴士瑯琊王徹.

2 The River of Stars (the Milky Way) was a figure for the Wei River. Both the Wei and Chan seem to have flooded so that Du Fu cannot reach Li Yu’s residence.

3 The land of the Hu is in the far northwest, while Yue is the far southeast. This is a standard figure for a distance that cannot be crossed.
式瞻北鄰居，
取適南巷翁。
掛席釣川漲，
焉知清興終。

3.29–31

秋雨歎三首

I

雨中百草秋爛死，
階下決明顏色鮮。  
著葉滿枝翠羽蓋，
開花無數黃金錢。  
涼風蕭蕭吹汝急，
恐汝後時難獨立。  
堂上書生空白頭，
臨風三嗅馨香泣。

II

闌風伏雨秋紛紛，
四海八荒同一雲。  
去馬來牛不復辨，
濁涇清渭何當分。
I gaze with admiration to my northern neighbor’s dwelling,
and find satisfaction with the old man of the southern lane.¹
We will hoist sail to fish on the river in flood,
how can I imagine my pure elation ending?

3.29–31
Sighing at the Autumn Rain

I

In the rain all the other plants have rotted and died in autumn,
but the sicklepods at the foot of the stairs have a fresh complexion.
They put forth leaves that fill the stalks, a canopy of kingfisher feathers,
their flowers bloom without number, coins of gold.
The chill winds are howling, and blow on you urgently,
I fear for you in times hereafter, that you cannot alone endure.
The scholar in the hall, his hair turns white in vain,
facing the wind he sniffs three times the fragrance weeping.²

II

Ruinous winds, rains that lay things low, in autumn come in gusts,
in the sea-girt world and eight wilds all lies under the same cloud-cover.
Horses and oxen coming and going I can no longer tell apart;
how is one to distinguish the muddy Jing and the clear Wei?

---
¹ These lines seem to refer to Li Yu and Wang Zhe respectively.
² This makes enigmatic reference to one of the most enigmatic passages in the Analects (X.18): “He said: ‘Hen pheasant on the mountain bridge. Is it not the season? Is it not the season?’ Zilu made a motion toward it. It sniffed three times and flew off.” 曰：「山梁雉雉, 時哉時哉. 子路共之, 三嗅而作.”
禾頭生耳黍穗黑，
農夫田父無消息。
城中斗米換衾裌，
相許寧論兩相直。

长安布衣谁比数，
反锁衡门守环堵。
老夫不出长蓬蒿，
稚子无忧走风雨。
雨声飕飕催早寒，
胡雁翅湿高飞难。
秋来未曾见白日，
泥污后土何时乾。

方丈三韩外，
崑崙万国西。
建标天地阔，
诣绝古今迷。
气得神仙迥，
恩承雨露低。
Fungus grows on the tops of grains, the ears of the millet are black; from farmers and field-workers there is no report. Within the city a peck of rice is exchanged for fine bedding;\(^1\) the bargain is struck and no one considers the relative cost of the two.

III

Who else can compare to this Chang’an commoner? —
I lock my barred gate and keep to my circling walls.
This old man doesn’t go out, artemesia and weeds grow tall; the young boy has no worries and goes running in the storm.
The sound of the rain is whooshing, hurrying the cold to come early, the wings of the Hu wild geese are wet, flying high is hard.
Since autumn came I have never seen the bright sun, mud befouls this august Earth — when will it ever dry?

3.32

Respectfully Presented to Zhang, Chamberlain for Ceremonials: Twenty Couplets

Fangzhang lies beyond the three Koreas,\(^2\)
Kunlun is west of the myriad domains:\(^3\)
Markers set in the vastness of Heaven and Earth, unreachable, eluding both present and past.
Your temper achieves such remoteness of the gods, in grace you receive the rain and dew lowered upon you.\(^4\)

---

1 This probably suggests the bedding that was part of a bride’s trousseau, finely embroidered by the bride herself and used on the wedding night.
2 Fangzhang was one of the isles of the immortals in the Eastern Ocean. In the Tang the Korea peninsula was divided into three kingdoms.
3 The Kunlun Range in the northwest was supposed to be the dwelling of immortals.
4 That is, imperial favor.
相門清議眾，
儒術大名齊。
軒冕羅天闕，
琳琅識介珪。
伶官詩必誦，
夔樂典猶稽。
健筆凌鸚鵡，
鋠鋒瑩鸊鷉。
友于皆挺拔，
公望各端倪。
通籍逾青瑣，
亨衢照紫泥。
靈虯傳夕箭，
歸馬散霜蹄。
能事聞重譯，
嘉謨及遠黎。
弼諧方一展，
斑序更何躋。
適越空顛躓，
遊梁竟慘淒。
A minister’s family, honest arguments many,
8 in Confucian arts your great fame is equal to his.2
Coaches and caps are arrayed by palace gates,
among fine jades, one recognizes the large jade plaque.3
The music officers surely chant your poems,
12 and you still investigate the canon of Kui’s music.4
Your sturdy brush surpasses “The Parrot,”5
your sharp points glisten with grebe fat.6
“Those you are friendly to” are all outstanding,7
16 in lordly esteem each is the ultimate.
Inscribed on the registers, you pass the blue chain-patterned gate,8
in the great concourse, you make the purple paste shine.9
When the divine kraken conveys the evening mark,10
20 your homeward horse speeds its frosty hooves.
Your ableness known, translated from one tongue on into others,
excellent plans have reached even remote folk.
Once your support and conciliation have been demonstrated,
24 to what place will you rise in the court ranks?
I went off to Yue, but in vain I stumbled and fell,11
I visited Liang but ended up miserable.12

1 The recipient is Zhang Ji, the son of the former minister Zhang Yue and the husband of the Ningqin Princess.
2 Equal to that of his father, the famous minister Zhang Yue.
3 The outstanding man.
4 Kui was a music officer of Shun’s day. This alludes to Zhang Ji’s position in the Court of Ceremonials.
5 *Mi Heng.
6 Grebe fat was used to oil the finest swords; the “point” of this sword probably refers to the sharpness of Zhang Ji’s writings.
7 Brothers.
8 To have one’s name on the palace registers permitted access to the palace.
9 That is, he drafts well-written edicts in court.
10 The kraken is the dripper of the water-clock, whose marker indicates evening.
11 This refers to Du Fu’s first examination failure after returning from earlier travels in the southeast.
12 Another failed attempt to enter government service.
謬知終畫虎，
微分是醯雞。
萍泛無休日，
桃陰想舊蹊。
吹噓人所羨，
騰躍事仍睽。
碧海真難涉，
青雲不可梯。
顧深慚鍛煉，
才小辱提攜。
檻束哀猿叫，
枝驚夜鵲棲。
幾時陪羽獵，
應指釣璜溪。

上韋左相二十韻(見素)

鳳曆軒轅紀，
龍飛四十春。
八荒開壽域，
一氣轉洪鈞。
Fool that I am, I understand that I end up painting a tiger,¹
3 my insignificant lot is that of a biting midge.
28 A duckweed adrift, I never rest a day,
I fancy that former path in the shade of the peach tree.²
32 Your recommendation is desired by all,
but the chance to mount on high still eludes me.
The emerald sea is truly hard to cross,
one cannot find a ladder to the blue clouds.
Your regard is deep, embarrassing my level of refinement,
36 my talent small, I don't deserve your support.
Bound in a cage, the mournful gibbon calls out,
startled on its branch, the magpie roosts by night.
When will you accompany the emperor on a fletched hunt?—
40 you will surely point out one fishing in Huang Creek.³

3.33
Presented to Wei Jiansu, Minister of the Left: Twenty Couplets⁴
Phoenix calendar, Xuanyuan’s time calculations,⁵
the dragon has taken flight for forty years.⁶
To the encircling wilds was opened a realm of long life,
the Single Force turned the Great Potter’s Wheel.⁷

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1 An aspiration that fails; the tiger not painted to perfection ends up looking like a dog.
2 This echoes the proverb “Peach and plum do not speak, but a path forms beneath them.” In short, Du Fu hopes for Zhang Ji’s patronage.
3 ‘Taigong.
4 The name of this office is anachronistic, not appearing until 757. The poem was written in 755, with Wei Jiansu holding the office under its earlier name.
5 Xuanyuan was the Yellow Emperor. When Shaohao, the Yellow Emperor’s son, became ruler, the arrival of a phoenix led him to call the calendar the “phoenix calendar.”
6 ‘That is, Xuanzong had been on the throne for forty years.
7 ‘The “Single Force,” yiqi 一氣, is the unitary qi of Heaven and Earth. The “Great Potter’s Wheel” is Heaven that produces the myriad things.
霖雨思賢佐，
丹青憶老臣。
應圖求駿馬，
驚代得麒麟。
沙汰江河濁，
調和鼎鼐新。
韋賢初相漢，
范叔已歸秦。
盛業今如此，
傳經固絕倫。
豫樟深出地，
滄海闊無津。
北斗司喉舌，
東方領搢紳。
Heavy rains, he longed for a virtuous helper,\(^1\)
in the “red and green” he thought of this old official.\(^2\)
In response to the picture he sought a fine steed,\(^3\)
amazing the age, he found a unicorn.
You scoured Yangzi and Yellow River of their mud,\(^4\)
then seasoned the cauldrons anew.\(^5\)
A Wei Xian, at first a minister of Han,\(^6\)
or a Fan Shu having already gone to Qin to serve.\(^7\)
Such is now your glorious achievement,
in transmitting the Classics you are indeed without peer.\(^8\)
The camphor tree comes forth from a remote place,\(^9\)
a gray sea vast, without a ford.
The Northern Dipper is in charge of throat and tongue,\(^10\)
now in the east you oversee those who stick badges in their sashes.\(^11\)

---

\(^1\) Sixty days of rain in Chang’an was taken as a bad omen, and Wei Jiansu was promoted on Yang Guozhong’s recommendation.
\(^2\) Wei Jiansu had served Xuanzong’s father Ruizong and had known Xuanzong since youth. The “red and green” in this context refers to the historical record.
\(^3\) Finding an exemplary minister (Wei Jiansu) according to an exemplary model.
\(^4\) This is understood as referring to the banishment of the former minister Chen Xilie.
\(^5\) “Seasoning” food in the ritual cauldrons was a standard figure for bringing harmony to government.
\(^6\) In the reign of Han Xuandi.
\(^7\) Fan Shu of Wei was summoned to be minister by King Zhao of Qin, which led to the dismissal of the Count of Rang, King Zhao’s half-brother, who had been dominating the government.
\(^8\) As Wei Xian and his son had been both ministers of Han and scholars of the Classics, so Wei Jiansu and his father were both ministers and scholars.
\(^9\) A figure for good “timber,” talent.
\(^10\) *History of the Latter Han* compared the Northern Dipper to the “throat and tongue” of Heaven, and the minister as the emperor’s throat and tongue. Wei Jiansu was Minister in the Ministry of War.
\(^11\) For a government that “faces southward” (the position of the emperor), to become Minister of the Left is “in the east.” “Those who stick badges in their sashes” are the corps of officials.
持衡留藻鑒，
聽履上星辰。
獨步才超古，
餘波德照鄰。
聰明過管輅，
尺牘倒陳遵。
豈是池中物，
由來席上珍。
廟堂知至理，
風俗盡還淳。
才傑俱登用，
愚蒙但隠淪。
長卿多病久，
子夏索居頻。
回首驅流俗，
生涯似眾人。
巫咸不可問，
鄒魯不容身。
感激時將晚，
蒼茫興有神。
為公歌此曲，
涕淚在衣巾。
Holding the scales, you remained to classify and gauge, your shoes were heard when you ascended to the stars. Unique, your talent surpasses antiquity, the lingering waves of your virtue illuminate all around. In perceptiveness you surpass Guan Lu, the letters you compose overwhelm Chen Zun. How could you be that creature in the pool? — you have always been a treasure on the mat. In the ancestral hall you understand perfect governance, customs entirely return to the pure and simple. All outstanding talents have been advanced and employed, but I, benighted fellow, merely sink in obscurity. Sima Xiangru has long been very sick, Zixia often lives in isolation. I look back on how I dashed through the ordinary world, all my life I have resembled most men. I may not ask Shaman Xian of my fate, there was no place for me in either Zou or Lu. I am stirred because my time is getting late, in the grand vastness there is divinity in my inspiration. For you, sir, I sing this song, and my tears are on my gown and kerchief.

In autumn of 754 Wei Jiansu became a minister, and Du Fu later sent him this poem of praise with the concluding hope for preferment.

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1 Wei Jiansu had earlier been Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Personnel, in charge of evaluating officials.
2 *Zheng Chong. “Ascending to the stars” is going to see the emperor.
3 A famous Classic of Changes scholar and diviner of the Three Kingdoms.
4 A famous letter-writer of the Eastern Han.
5 A hibernating dragon; Wei is, rather, a dragon extending to show his full powers.
6 A figure for a Confucian scholar waiting to be summoned for service.
7 The ancestral hall stands for the court.
8 *Sima Xiangru.
9 Confucius’s disciple.
10 In “Li sao” Qu Yuan asked Shaman Xian to divine his future and what course he should take.
11 Referring to Mencius of Zou and Confucius of Lu, both of whom roamed about because they were not appreciated in their home states. Du Fu is comparing himself to them.
君不见
左辅白沙如白水，
缭以周墙百馀里。
龙媒昔是渥洼生，
汗血今称献于此。
苑中騄駬三千匹，
丰草青青寒不死。
食之豪健西域无，
每岁攻駮冠边鄙。

王有虎臣司苑门，
入门天厩皆云屯。
驊騧一骨独当御，
春秋二时归至尊。
至尊内外马盈亿，
伏枥在坰空大存。
逸群绝足信殊杰，
倜傥权奇难具论。
3.34

Sand Park Pasture: A Ballad

Have you not seen
the white sands of the Eastern Bulwark like white waters,\(^1\)
surrounded by an encircling wall for more than a hundred leagues?
Long ago the dragon-decoy was born in the Wowa's waters,\(^2\)
and sweaters-of-blood, now commended, are presented to this place.\(^3\)
In the park are tall stallions and mares, three thousand head,
luxuriant grasses stretch green, not dying in cold weather.
Eating this they grow sturdy and tough, none such in the Western Regions,
every year they break in the colts, the pride of the borderlands.

The king has a tiger officer in charge of the park's gate,
when one enters the gate the imperial stud all mass like clouds.
Sushuang steeds, of identical frame, are alone suited for imperial use,\(^4\)
twice a year, in spring and autumn, they are sent to His Majesty.
Both within and without the palace His Majesty has horses up to a million,
those at the trough or far off in the wilds exist in great numbers in vain.
Above the common run, supreme of hoof, of truly unusual excellence,
incomparably rare, remarkably powerful, hard to describe it all.

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1 The Eastern Bulwark is literally “the left carriage rail,” the region to the east of Chang’an (presuming the imperial orientation facing south) that “supports” the capital region.
2 Han Wudi’s song about the “horses of Heaven,” describes them as “dragon-decoys”; i.e., they bring true dragons. The *Han History* “Annals of Emperor Wu” describe the horses of Heaven as actually being born in the Wowa’s waters, further strengthening their link to dragons. The Wowa was a river in the Dunhuang region.
3 Ferghana horses were called “thousand league horses” because they were supposed to be able to run a thousand leagues a day. When they reached their destination they were said to sweat blood.
4 Sushuang was the name of an exceptional horse, hence the type.
纍纍塠阜藏奔突，
往往坡陀縱超越。
角壯翻騰麋鹿遊，
浮深簸蕩鼋鼈窟。

泉出巨魚長比人，
丹砂作尾黃金鱗。　
豈知異物同精氣，
雖未成龍亦有神。

3.35

橋陵詩三十韻因呈縣內諸官

先帝昔晏駕，
茲山朝百靈。
崇岡擁象設，
沃野開天庭。
即事壯重險，
論功超五丁。
坡陀因厚地，
卻略羅峻屏。
雲闕虛冉冉，
風松肅泠泠。
Rolling hummocks and dunes hide their headlong gallop, everywhere over slopes and rises they bound away as they please. Competing in vigor, they prance in flight, roaming with the deer, floating in deep waters, they are swept along to lairs of alligators.

The abyss brought forth mighty fish as long as a man, the tails were of cinnabar, golden were their scales. Who would have thought that different creatures share the same essence, though not turned into dragons yet, they still have divine spirit.

3.35

Poem on Qiaoling in Thirty Couplets, to Be Shown to the Officials of the County

When the late emperor made his last journey, the hundred spirits of this mountain came to his court. The lofty hill enfolds his tomb image, the fertile wilds open as his palace grounds. I admire the layered steepness of what lies before me, an achievement judged to surpass the five stout men. Sloping along the lay of the thick earth, drawn back behind, a towering screen is spread. Towers to the clouds seem moving, insubstantial, wind in the pines, solemnly rustling.

1 Qiaoling was the tomb of Xuanzong’s father, Ruizong, in Fengxian, northeast of the capital.
2 These were men of Shu sent to Qin, who did the herculean task of opening a way through the mountains.
3 Mountain cliffs behind the tomb mound.
橋陵詩三十韻因呈縣內諸官

石門霧露白，玉殿莓苔青。宮女晚知曙，祠官朝見星。空梁簇畫戟，陰井敲銅瓶。中使日夜繼，惟王心不寧。豈徒恤備享，尚謂求無形。孝理敦國政，神凝推道經。瑞芝產廟柱，好鳥鳴巖扃。高岳前嶽翠，洪河左瀙漚。金城蓄峻趾，沙苑交回汀。永與奧區固，川原紛眇冥。居然赤縣立，臺榭爭岧亭。官屬果稱是，聲華真可聽。
Frost and dew white on the stone gateway,
moss and lichens green in the jade halls.
The palace ladies are late to know daybreak,
officers of the shrine at dawn see the stars.
By the empty rafters cluster painted pikes,
the shadowy well clinks with a bronze pitcher.
Court messengers come continuously day and night,
our king’s heart is not at peace.
It’s not only that he is concerned with the completeness of offerings—
he still seeks something from that which is formless.¹
With filial rule he is sincere in governing the state,
concentrating his spirit, he advocates Daoist classics.
Auspicious mushrooms grew on the temple columns,
a good bird sang out by the gate on the cliff.
The high Marchmount looms before it,²
the mighty River winds swirling to its left.
It holds the looming ruins of the Great Wall,³
at Sandy Park winding sandbars cross.
Forever firm, together with the core region,⁴
river and plains everywhere faint in the distance.
Securely established as a county of the capital district,
terraces and kiosks vie with each other in height.
The officers here, as expected, suit their offices,
the splendor of their reputations is truly pleasing to the ear.

¹ That is, from the spirit of his father.
² Mount Hua.
³ A section built in Qin times.
⁴ Chang’an.
橋陵詩三十韻因呈縣內諸官

王劉美竹潤，
裴李春蘭馨。
鄭氏才振古，
啖侯筆不停。
遣辭必中律，
利物常發硎。
綺繡相輾轉，
琳琅愈青熒。
側聞魯恭化，
秉德崔瑗銘。
太史候鸞影，
王喬隨鶴翎。
朝儀限霄漢，
客思迴林坰。
輓軒辭下杜，
飄飄陵濁涇。
諸生舊短褐，
旅泛一浮萍。
荒歳兒女瘦，
暮途涕泗零。
主人念老馬，
廨署容秋螢。
流寓理豈愜，
窮愁醉未醒。
Wang and Liu, as glossy as fine bamboo,

Pei and Li, the aroma of spring eupatorium.
And Zheng, whose talent rouses the ancient mode,
Count Dan, whose brush never stops.
The phrases they produce always match regulation,

sharp things, always just off the whetstone.¹

Finely wrought embroidery, turned over and over,
rare jade, increasingly green and lustrous.
I have remotely heard of Lu Gong’s cultural transformation,²

in grasping virtue, there is Cui Yuan’s inscription.³

The Grand Astrologer observed the outlines of wild ducks,⁴
and Wang Qiao went with a crane’s pinions.⁵
Court ceremony is confined to the River of Stars,⁶

the wayfarer’s thoughts turn to woods and wilds.

In hardship and despair I left Xiadu,
and, tossed along, I crossed the muddy Jing.
One of the scholars, in an old short homespun robe,

I drift in travel, a duckweed afloat.

A famine year, my sons and daughters grow thin,
on the twilight road my tears fall.
My hosts give thought to this old horse,

the official lodgings admit this autumn firefly.

How can I feel satisfied lodging as a drifter?—
in the depths of sorrow, I never sober from drunkenness.

¹ Referring to Dan’s brush, hence his style.
² An Eastern Han county magistrate who governed by virtue rather than punishments.
³ Another county magistrate of the Eastern Han, who wrote an inscription to be placed beside his seat to remind him of virtuous action.
⁴ *Wang Qiao.
⁵ When Wangzi Qiao became an immortal, he returned to the mortal world to take his leave riding a crane.
⁶ That is, it too remote for Du Fu to approach.
何當攜俗累，
浩蕩乘滄溟。

3.36
送蔡希魯都尉還隴右因寄高三十五書記

蔡子勇成癖，
彎弓西射胡。
健兒寧鬥死，
壯士恥為儒。
官是先鋒得，
材緣挑戰須。
身輕一鳥過，
槍急萬人呼。
雲幕隨開府，
春城赴上都。
馬頭金匼匝，
駝背錦模糊。
咫尺雪山路，
歸飛青海隅。
上公猶寵錫，
突將且前驅。
漢使黃河遠，
涼州白麥枯。
When shall I shake off the bonds of the common world
and ride the dark seas, swept boundless and free?

The famine in Chang’an and Du Fu’s failure to find patronage finally led
him to take his family north to Fengxian. Here Du Fu is essentially begging
for food and lodging for himself and his family.

3.36

Seeing Commander Cai Xilu Off on His Return to Longyou, By This
I Write to Secretary Gao (35)¹

Master Cai’s courage is a mad passion,
he bends his bow to shoot Hu in the west.
A regular would rather die in combat,²
a bold man is ashamed to be a scholar.
His office was gotten by being the vanguard,
his talent was needed for provoking battle.
His body light, a single bird in passage,
his lance-work swift, ten thousand hurrahs.
Your cloudlike tent went with the Commander,³
setting out for the capital city in spring.
Your horse’s head wrapped about with gold,
your camel’s back, a dazzle of brocade.
The road to the Mountains of Snow is but a foot away,
you now fly back to a corner of Kokonor.
Your superior still is being granted favor,
his attack general now gallops ahead for a while.
A Han deputy, the Yellow River is far,
at Liangzhou the white wheat is withered.

¹ Original note: “At the time Geshu [Han] had come to court to present a petition,
and he made Master Cai go back ahead of him” 時哥舒入奏, 勒蔡子先歸.
² Jian’er 健兒, literally something like “stout lads,” was a Tang military category for
troops we might call “regulars” (as opposed to conscripts or militiamen). These
made up the core of the Central Asian armies.
³ Geshu Han, commander of the Western armies.
因君問消息，
好在阮元瑜。

3.37

醉歌行

陸機二十作文賦，
汝更少年能綴文。
總角草書又神速，
世上兒子徒紛紛。
驊騮作駒已汗血，
鸜鳥舉翮連青雲。
詞源倒流三峽水，
筆陣獨掃千人軍。

只今年纔十六七，
射策君門期第一。
舊穿楊葉真自知，
暫蹶霜蹄未為失。
偶然擢秀非難取，
會是排風有毛質。
汝身已見唾成珠，
汝伯何由髮如漆。
Through you I ask word of him,
how is he doing, our Ruan Yuanyu?¹

**3.37**

Drunken Song²

Lu Ji at twenty composed the “Poetic Exposition on Literature”; you, at an even younger age, were able to write literary works. With hair in tufts your draft script also showed divine speed,³ while other boys of the age were just running around in crowds. When the Hualiu steed is but a colt it already sweats blood; then the bird of prey spreads its pinions and reaches the blue clouds. Fountainhead of eloquence pouring out the water of the Three Gorges, ranks of the brush, alone sweeping away an army of a thousand.

But now your age is just sixteen or seventeen, answering examination questions at the ruler’s gate, you aimed to be number one.

He who formerly shot a poplar leaf truly knew himself,⁴ if the frosty hooves trip up once it is not to be taken as failure. A chance to be selected for excellence is not hard to achieve, a time will come when you have the feathers to breast the wind and fly. In your person I already have seen spittle turned to pearls, how can I, your uncle, have hair black as lacquer?

---

¹ The third-century writer Ruan Yu is here a figure for Gao Shi.
² Original note: “Parting from my nephew Qin, returning after failing the examination” 別從侄勤落第歸.
³ The “hair in tufts” indicates a child before adolescence.
⁴ The famous Chu archer Yang Yiji.
春光澹沱秦東亭，
渚蒲牙白水荇青。
風吹客衣日杲杲，
樹攪離思花冥冥。
酒盡沙頭雙玉瓶，
眾賓皆醉我獨醒。
乃知貧賤別更苦，
吞聲踯躅涕淚零。

3.38

陪李金吾花下飲

勝地初相引，
徐行得自娛。
見輕吹鳥毳，
隨意數花鬚。
細草偏稱坐，
香醪懶再酤。
醉歸應犯夜，
可怕李金吾。
Spring light wafts far and wide at the pavilion east of Qin, sprouts of reeds by isles are white, the water-poppies are green. The breeze blows the traveler’s clothes, the sun grows bright, trees stir up thoughts of separation, the flowers are dark. The ale is gone here on the sands, a pair of jade jugs, all the crowd of guests are drunk, I alone am sober. I now understand that when poor and low parting is even more bitter, I choke back my voice and pace, tears streaming down.

3.38

Accompanying Li of the Imperial Guard Drinking under the Flowers

First led here to this splendid scene, walking slowly, I get to enjoy myself. Seeing its lightness, I blow off bird-down, I count stamens of flowers as I please. Fine plants, especially suited for sitting, fragrant brew, too lazy to buy more. If we go back drunk, we will surely violate curfew— and then we should fear Li, officer of the Guard?¹

¹ The Imperial Guard, the Jinwu Guard, to which Li belongs were in charge of enforcing curfew.
官定後戲贈
不作河西尉，
淒涼為折腰。
老夫怕趨走，
率府且逍遙。
耽酒須微祿，
狂歌托聖朝。
故山歸興盡，
回首向風飆。

去矣行
君不見韝上鷹，
一飽則飛掣。
焉能作堂上燕，
銜泥附炎熱。
野人曠蕩無靦顏，
豈可久在王侯間。
未試囊中餐玉法，
明朝且入藍田山。
3.39

Playfully Presented after My Post Was Determined

I won’t serve as Hexi’s sheriff,
dreary to bend one’s waist for others.
This old fellow fears having to scurry around,
a post in the Guard is more relaxed.
Addicted to ale, I need a modest salary,
my wild songs are lodged in our sage dynasty.
Gone is my impulse to go back to the mountains of home,
I turn my head and face gusts of wind.

3.40

Gone!: A Ballad

Have you not seen the hawk on the gauntlet?—
once it’s eaten its fill, it flies swiftly away.
How could it act like the swallows in the hall,
mud in their beaks, keeping close to the heat?
The man of the wilds is expansive and free, his face never has to show
shame,
how can he long remain among princes and counts?
Not having tried the technique in my bag for dining on jade,
tomorrow at dawn I’ll go off for a while into Lantian Mountain.

1 Original note: “At the time I was relieved of the post of sheriff of Hexi and
instead put in the Military Service Section of the Right Guard Command” 時免河西尉，為右衛率府兵曹.
夜聽許十誦詩愛而有作

許生五臺賓，
業白出石壁。
余亦師粲可，
身猶縛禪寂。
何階子方便，
謬引為匹敵。
離索晚相逢，
包蒙欣有擊。
誦詩渾遊衍，
四座皆辟易。
應手看捶鉤，
清心聽鳴鏑。
精微穿溟涬，
飛動摧霹靂。
陶謝不枝梧，
風騷共推激。
紫燕自超詣，
翠駮誰剪剔。
君意人莫知，
人間夜寥闇。
3.41

By Night Listening to Xu(134,252),(990,793) (10) Chant Poems; I Cherished This and Wrote Something

Master Xu was a sojourner on Mount Wutai, his karma spotless, he left Stonecliff Temple. I too took Sengcan and Huike as my teachers, but I still am tied to the stillness of Chan. How can I rise to your mastery of expedient means?—I have been mistakenly brought in as your match. Alone and isolated, I have met you late, I am pleased that my ignorance will be dispelled. In chanting poems you are utterly free and easy, everyone present yields to you. We watch as you deftly fashion swords, with pure minds we listen to your singing arrows. Essential and faint, you pierce primal chaos, stirring in flight, you drive on the thunder. Tao and Xie cannot obstruct your course, the Airs and the Sao are both praised and stirred. Purple Swallow on its own surpasses all, who ever trimmed or shaved Azure Dapple? No one understands your mind— in the mortal world is the vast stillness of night.

1 A temple complex, where Xu studied Buddhism.
2 The second and third patriarchs of the Chan school.
3 That is, Du Fu has not achieved enlightenment.
4 The perfect craftsman in Zhuangzi’s “Knowledge Wanders North” 知北遊.
5 The poets *Tao Qian and Xie Lingyun or Xie Tiao (464–499).
6 This was the one of famous nine steeds of Han Wendi.
3.42

戲簡鄭廣文虔兼呈蘇司業源明

廣文到官舍，
繫馬堂階下。
醉則騎馬歸，
頗遭官長罵。

才名四十年，
坐客寒無氈。
賴有蘇司業，
時時與酒錢。

3.43

夏日李公見訪

遠林暑氣薄，
公子過我遊。
貧居類村塢，
僻近城南樓。

旁舍頗淳樸，
所願亦易求。
隔屋喚西家，
借問有酒不。
3.42

A Playful Note to Instructor Zheng Qian, Also to Be Delivered to the Director of Studies Su Yuanming

When the Instructor reaches his office,
he ties his horse at the foot of the stairs to the hall.
When drunk he rides back on his horse,
and gets badly scolded by the senior official.

Famed for his talent for forty years,
the guests at his board are cold and have no blankets.
But luckily there is Director of Studies Su
who now and then gives him money for ale.

3.43

Visited by Mr. Li on a Summer Day

Far in the woods the sultry weather is milder,
the young nobleman stops by my place on an excursion.
My poor dwelling is like a rural hamlet,
out of the way, near the large buildings in the southern suburbs.
My neighbors are quite simple and pure:
what I wish for can be easily gotten.
I call to the home next door to the west,
asking if they have ale or not.
牆頭過濁醪，
展席俯長流。
清風左右至，
客意已驚秋。
巢多眾鳥鬨，
葉密鳴蟬稠。
苦道此物聒，
孰謂吾廬幽。
水花晚色靜，
庶足充淹留。
預恐尊中盡，
更起為君謀。
Some thick brew is then passed over the wall,
and I spread mats overlooking the long stream.
Cool breezes come from every side,

12 my guest is surprised, already sensing autumn’s approach.
Nests are many, flocks of birds quarrel,
leaves are dense, the singing cicadas thick.
Troubled, I know that these creatures are noisy,

16 no one would say that my cottage is secluded.
But the evening colors of waters and flowers are tranquil
which I hope is enough to make you linger on.
I’m afraid we will soon run out of ale,

20 and get up again to figure out what to do on your account.