送率府程錄事還鄉

鄙夫行衰謝，
抱病昏妄集。
常時往還人，
記一不識十。
程侯晚相遇，
與語才傑立。
薰然耳目開，
頗覺聰明入。
千載得鮑叔，
末契有所及。
意鍾老柏青，
義動修蛇螫。
若人可數見，
慰我垂白泣。
告別無淹晷，
百憂復相襲。
內愧突不黔，
庶羞以賙給。
素絲挈長魚，
碧酒隨玉粒。
5.1

Seeing Off Office Manager Cheng of the Guard Command on His Return Home

This humble fellow is getting into his dotage, being sickly, my muddle-headedness increases. Of those I often have contact with

I remember one, but don't recognize ten. I met Master Cheng only recently, when talking with him, outstanding talent shows. My ears and eyes are opened by his graciousness,

I strongly feel that it gets through to my understanding. After a thousand years I have found my Bao Shu, I have achieved something by his willingness to befriend me. Purpose concentrated, an old cypress green,

your sense of right stirs a long serpent hibernating. If I could see this person often, it would console my weeping, hair hanging white. When you announced your departure so soon,

a hundred cares again beset me. Within I am embarrassed that my chimney is not blackened, but you have brought fine delicacies to help out. On a white string you carry a long fish,

sapphire ale is accompanied by jade grains of rice.

---

1 Original note: “Cheng brought ale and food to meet me and take his leave” 程携酒饌相就取别.
2 Guan Zhong lived in poverty, but Bao Shu treated him very well; and when Bao entered the service of the Count Huan of Qi, he recommended Guan Zhong. Guan Zhong eventually became Duke Huan’s chief minister.
3 This is a figure from the Yi: the dragon and serpent hibernate to protect themselves.
4 I have no wood for a fire to prepare a meal for you.
途窮見交態，
世梗悲路澀。
東風吹春冰，
泱莽后土濕。

念君惜羽翮，
既飽更思戢。
莫作翻雲鶻，
聞呼向禽急。

5.2

鄭駙馬池臺喜遇鄭廣文同飲

不謂生戎馬，
何知共酒杯。
燃臍郿塢敗，
握節漢臣回。

白髮千莖雪，
丹心一寸灰。
別離經死地，
披寫忽登臺。

重對秦簫發，
俱過阮宅來。
At the end of my rope, I see how a real friend behaves,
the age is blocked, I grieve at the hard ways.
The east wind blows on the springtime ice,
far and wide the holy soil is wet.
When I think on you, be sparing with your wings,
onece having eaten your fill, think on folding them.
Be not the eagle that soars through the clouds,
when hearing a shout, speeds toward the bird.

5.2

At the Pond and Terrace of Consort Zheng, Happy to Meet Instructor Zheng [Qian] and Drink with Him

I never thought that I would live among war horses,
and then who would have known we would share a cup of ale?
Burning navel, the fort at Mei ruined,1
holding his standard, the Han officer returned.2
White hair, a thousand stalks of snow.
loyal heart, one square inch of ash.3
Parted, we passed through places of dying,
suddenly we are climbing a terrace and telling all.
Once again we face Qin’s pipes playing,4
together we come to visit Ruan’s house.5

1  When Dong Zhuo (d. 192) held power, he built a fort at Mei with treasures and provisions to last thirty years. Later, when he was killed in Chang’an, the soldiers lit his navel; he was so fat that the fire burned for several days. This may refer to the death of An Lushan, also notoriously fat.
2  *Su Wu. This refers to Zheng Qian, who had been taken to Luoyang by An Lushan’s troops; according to Du Fu, Zheng remained loyal (“holding his standard” also means “keeping his integrity”), though that was not the verdict of the court.
3  That is, the heart has burned away with cares.
4  *Xiaoshi. This refers to Consort Zheng; imperial son-in-laws were commonly compared to Xiaoshi.
5  Ruan Xian was *Ruan Ji’s nephew; Ruan Ji lived on the south side of the street, while Ruan Xian lived on the north side. This refers to the relation between the Consort Zheng Qianyao and Zheng Qian.
留連春夜舞，
淚落強徘徊。

5.3–5
自京竄至鳳翔喜達行在所三首

I
西憶岐陽信，
無人遂卻回。
眼穿當落日，
心死著寒灰。
茂樹行相引，
連山望忽開。
所親驚老瘦，
辛苦賊中來。

II
愁思胡笳夕，
凄涼漢苑春。
生還今日事，
間道暫時人。
司隸章初睹，
南陽氣已新。
We linger on, dancing in the spring night,
shedding tears, we try to keep staying on.

Du Fu’s old friend Zheng Qian had been taken by An Lushan’s forces and forced to accept a post in An Lushan’s regime. Here he has returned to Chang’an. When Suzong’s forces retook the capitals he was sent in exile to Taizhou.

5.3–5

From the Capital Secretly Making My Way to Fengxiang and Delighting to Reach the Temporary Palace

I

I think back on the news from Qiyang to the west,
that no one successfully got back.¹
My eyes stared in that direction, facing the setting sun,
in the heart that had died, cold ashes caught fire.
Lush trees led me on as I went,
joined mountains suddenly appeared to my gaze.
Close friends were shocked that, gaunt and old,
I had, in bitter hardship, come from among the rebels.

II

Sad thoughts on evenings with Hu fifes,
a dismal spring in the parks of Han.²
A return alive is what happened today,
for a while I had been someone on back roads.
When I first saw the insignia of the Metropolitan Commandant,³
the aura over Nanyang was already renewed.⁴

¹ That is, when he was in Chang’an the word was that no one could get through rebel-held territory to Qiyang, near which was Suzong’s temporary capital.
² That is, in Chang’an.
³ This was the title held by Guangwudi, the restoration emperor who founded the Eastern Han, before he became emperor.
⁴ Nanyang was Guangwudi’s native place.
喜心翻倒極，
8 嗟咽淚沾巾。

III

死去憑誰報，
歸來始自憐。
猶瞻太白雪，
喜遇武功天。
影靜千官裏，
心蘇七校前。
今朝漢社稷，
8 新數中興年。

5.6

送樊二十三侍御赴漢中判官

威弧不能弦，
自爾無寧歲。
川谷血橫流，
4 豺狼沸相噬。
天子從北來，
長驅振凋敝。
The delighted heart was utterly overturned, and sobbing, tears soaked my kerchief.

III

Had I died, who would have brought the news? — having made it, I pity myself for the first time. I can still catch sight of Mount Taibai’s snow I joyously meet the heavens over Wugong.¹

My shadow is stilled among the thousand officials, the heart is healed before the Seven Guard units. This morning the dynastic altars of Han will begin a new count: the Restoration years.

_In early summer of 757 Du Fu escaped from the rebel-held capital and made his way west to Fengxiang, where Suzong had set up court. There he was appointed a Reminder, an official who stayed close to the ruler and “reminded” him of important issues he had overlooked. At the time Suzong was sending out his own officials to key positions in the region he controlled._

5.6

Seeing Off Attendant Censor Fan (23) on his Way to a Post as Administrative Assistant in Hanzhong

The Bow that overawes could not be strung,² since then there have been no peaceful years. In river valleys the blood floods wildly, wolves and jackals bubble up and bite. The Son of Heaven came from the north, galloping long, to rouse us from ruin.

---

¹ Taibai Mountain and Wugong county were near Fengxiang.
² This is a figure for imperial authority, which failed to prevent the rebellion of An Lushan. The Bow is a constellation pointed at the Wolf, the constellation governing insurrection. If the Bow does not point at the Wolf, rebellion will follow.
頓兵岐梁下，
卻跨沙漠裔。
二京陷未收，
四極我得制。
蕭索漢水清，
緬通淮湖稅。
使者紛星散，
王綱尚旒綴。
南伯從事賢，
君行立談際。
生知七曜曆，
手畫三軍勢。
冰雪淨聰明，
雷霆走精銳。
幕府輟諫官，
朝廷無此例。
至尊方旰食，
仗爾布嘉惠。
補闕暮徵入，
柱史晨征憩。
正當艱難時，
實藉長久計。
Troops massed beneath Mounts Qi and Liang,

having crossed over back from the desert’s edge.¹

Though the two capitals, fallen, have not been retaken,

we have control to the four ends of the realm.

The Han’s bleak windswept waters are clear,²

a remote route for tax from the Huai and lakes.

Men on missions are as many as scattered stars,

the royal net of rule is still like banner tassels attached.³

The Earl of the South is worthy in handling matters,⁴

you will go to where he stands and chats.⁵

You full well understand tracking the Seven Luminaries,

your hand marks out the Grand Army’s dispositions.

Your apprehension is as bright as ice and snow,

your military sharpness speeds like thunder.

In headquarters you were allowed to be a remonstrating official;

such is unprecedented in the court.

His Majesty now takes his meals late,⁶

and depends on you to spread his fine grace.

An omissioner, summoned into court in the evening,

a censor, journeying and resting at dawn.

Right now we are in times of difficulty.

and we truly depend on long-range plans.

---

¹ This refers either to the recall of the northwestern armies or to Suzong’s Uighur allies.
² Probably referring to the appointment of Du Fu’s friend Li Yu as Prince of Hanzhong. Since imperial tax revenues from the lower Yangzi could no longer be sent up the Grand Canal to the Yellow River, the route up the Han River through Hanzhong was essential.
³ “Attached tassels,” zhuliu 绶旒, was an old figure for the way the feudal lords were attached to the ruler. The inverted form used here, liuzhui 輸旒, was used in Liu Kun’s (271–318) famous memorial during the breakup of the Western Jin: “The peril of the ruling house is something like banner tassels attached” 國家之危有若旒綴. This seems to be Du Fu’s sense here, particularly in the context of the more tightly woven “net” of imperial rule.
⁴ This was Li Yu, raised from Duke of Longxi to Prince of Hanzhong.
⁵ Suggesting engagement in his duties.
⁶ Because he is so busy.
回風吹獨樹，
白日照執袂。
慟哭蒼煙根，
山門萬重閉。
居人莽牢落，
遊子方迢遞。
徘徊悲生離，
局促老一世。
陶唐歌遺民，
後漢更列帝。
恨無匡復姿，
聊欲從此逝。
Whirling gusts blow on the solitary tree,
the bright sun shines on the sleeve I grasp.¹
Moved to tears in the gray-green mist,
mountain gates, closed in ten thousand layers.
The one who stays is gloomy in the vastness,
and the traveler is now far in the distance.
I pace about, sad at this parting of the living,
cramped up, old in my generation.
They sang of people left over from the time of Tao and Tang,²
the Later Han continued a line of emperors.³
Distressed that I don’t look like one to restore the dynasty,
I would just go off from this point on.

Not a few of Du Fu’s poems from this period are seeing such men off as they went to take up their posts. In poetic terms Du Fu gives the background of the situation, explains why the post is a critical one in terms of the current military situation, and gives the recipient a sense that what he is doing is important. He often does this in his later poetry as well, but the clarity of the problems in the current political crisis gives these poems an edge. In peaceful times to be sent from the imperial presence to a post in the provinces would be a cause for resentment—even though in this case there was probably no diminishment in his grade in the civil service. Du Fu explains why this is a mark of imperial confidence in the recipient’s abilities and how crucial the post is—ensuring the transport of tax revenues to the throne.

¹ The sleeve was grasped in parting.
² This refers to the famous visit of the Prince of Wu to Lu, recounted in the Zuo Tradition (Xiang 29). The prince listened to the Classic of Poetry, commenting on each section. His response to the Airs of Tang was that “their brooding was deep,” and that they must be “people left over from Tao and Tang.” Tao and Tang were the fiefs of Yao, hence referring to that sage-king. The allusion is based on “longing for Tang,” as both Yao and the current dynasty.
³ That is, as the Eastern Han continued the dynasty after the usurpation of Wang Mang, so the Tang will continue after the An Lushan Rebellion.
送韋十六評事充同谷郡防御判官

昔沒賊中時，
潛與子同遊。
今歸行在所，
王事有去留。
逼側兵馬間，
主憂急良籌。
子雖軀幹小，
老氣橫九州。
挺身艱難際，
張目視寇讎。
朝廷壯其節，
奉詔令參謀。
鑾輿駐鳳翔，
同谷為咽喉。
西扼弱水道，
南鎮枹罕陬。
此邦承平日，
剽劫吏所羞。
況乃胡未滅，
控帶莽悠悠。
5.7

Seeing Off Case Reviewer Wei (16) to Temporarily Fill the Post of Defense Administrative Assistant in Tonggu

In the past, when I had fallen among the rebels, I went roaming with you incognito. Now we have come to the temporary capital, hard-pressed among troops and horses, the ruler worries about the urgent need for good counsel. Although your stature is small, your mature energy stretches across the nine regions. You roused yourself on occasion of the troubles, opened your eyes wide and took a look at the enemy. The court thought your principles vigorous, receiving a summons, you were ordered to take part in planning. The phoenix-belled palanquin halts at Fengxiang,\(^1\) Tonggu serves as its throat. It holds the road west to the Ruo River, it guards the borders of Fuhan Commandery to the south. In the age of peace, this land was the shame of its officers because of banditry. Even more now, when the Hu are not yet destroyed,\(^2\) the scope of its reach goes far into the wilderness.

\(^1\) That is, the Emperor has set up his temporary capital there.
\(^2\) The rebels.
府中韋使君，
道足示懷柔。
令侄才俊茂，
二美又何求。
受詞太白腳，
走馬仇池頭。
古色沙土裂，
積陰雲雲稠。
羌父豪豬靴，
羌兒青兕裘。
吹角向月窟，
蒼山旌旆愁。
鳥驚出死樹，
龍怒拔老湫。
古來無人境，
今代橫戈矛。
傷哉文儒士，
憤激馳林丘。
中原正格鬥，
後會何緣由。
百年賦命定，
豈料沉與浮。
且復戀良友，
握手步道周。
In the headquarters Defense Commissioner Wei\(^1\) has the way to demonstrate accommodating gentleness.\(^2\)
His excellent nephew is an extraordinary talent—
with two such fine men, what more do they need?
You received your orders at the foot of Taibai,
you will gallop your horse to beside Chou Pool.\(^3\)
Of ancient aspect, where sand and earth split,
with massed shadow, the snow and clouds thick.
Old Qiang there wear boots of boar-hide,\(^4\)
young Qiang wear capes of blue rhino skin.
Bugles are blown facing the Cave of the Moon,\(^5\)
in the gray mountains the banners are mournful.
The birds are startled, coming out from dead trees,
dragons rage and rise up in old tarns.
Since ancient days, an uninhabited realm,
in this present age, pikes and lances are brandished.
Painful, indeed, that a man of letters and learning,
should gallop those wooded hills, stirred to rage.
On the Central Plain they are fighting now,
what means will we have to meet again?
In life’s hundred years our fates are sealed,
how can we tell whether we will sink or float?
Yet for the moment I cherish my good friend,
clasping his hand as we walk by the roadside.

---

1  Case Reviewer Wei’s uncle.
2  “Accommodating gentleness” was a principle of successful governance.
3  In Tonggu.
4  The Qiang were a Tibetan people who inhabited the region.
5  The Cave of the Moon was supposed to be in the far west. Chinese armies moved through Tonggu westward.
論兵遠壑淨，
亦可縱冥搜。
題詩得秀句，
札翰時相投。

5.8

述懷

去年潼關破，
妻子隔絕久。
今夏草木長，
脫身得西走。
麻鞋見天子，
衣袖見兩肘。
朝廷愍生還，
親故傷老醜。
涕淚受拾遺，
流離主恩厚。
柴門雖得去，
未忍即開口。
寄書問三川，
不知家在否。
比聞同罹禍，
殺戮到雞狗。
You will discuss military matters in the serenity of a distant ravine, you can also seek mysteries to your heart’s content. If you get fine lines in writing poems, send them to me sometime in a letter.

5.8

An Account of My Concerns

Last year Tong Pass was broken, I have long been cut off from wife and children. This summer, as plants and trees grew tall, I escaped and got to flee west. In hemp sandals I met the Son of Heaven, both elbows showed through the sleeves of my clothes. The court had sympathy that I had made it alive, old friends were pained at how old and ugly I had become. With tears I received the Reminder’s post, our lord’s grace was great for those who fled. Though I could have gone off to my ramshackle gate,¹ I could not bring myself to mention it right then. I sent a letter asking of Three Rivers,² not knowing whether my family survived. Since then I heard that all there had suffered calamity, massacred down to the chickens and dogs.

---
¹ That is, to go to see after his family.
² A county next to Fuzhou, where Du Fu’s family was staying.
山中漏茅屋，
誰復依戶牖。
摧頹蒼松根，
地冷骨未朽。
幾人全性命，
盡室豈相偶。
嶔岑猛虎場，
鬱結迴我首。
自寄一封書，
今已十月後。
反畏消息來，
寸心亦何有。
漢運初中興，
平生老耽酒。
沈思歡會處，
恐作窮獨叟。

5.9

得家書

去憑遊客寄，
來為附家書。
今日知消息，
他鄉且舊居。
In the mountains under a leaky thatch roof,  
is there anyone still leaning at the window?\footnote{1 He is imagining that his wife may have been killed. She would lean at the window, thinking of him and hoping he would come back.}  
In the roots of a broken gray-green pine,  
the ground is so cold that their bones won’t have rotted.  
How many people escaped with their lives?—  
how can the entire household be together again?  
Mountainous land, a field for fierce tigers,  
my heart knots within, I turn my head.  
Since I sent them a letter,  
it has already been more than ten months.  
Now instead I dread that news \textit{will} come—  
what feelings are there in this heart?  
The Han’s fate now for the first time rises anew,\footnote{2 That is, the fate of the Tang.}  
all my life I have been a lover of ale.  
I yearn deeply for that moment of joyous reunion  
and fear becoming a poor and solitary old man.

5.9

Getting a Letter from Home

I counted on a traveler to send one,  
coming back, he was entrusted with a letter from home.  
Today I got the news,  
that they are living there where they were before.
熊兒幸無恙，
驥子最憐渠。
臨老羈孤極，
傷時會合疏。
二毛趨帳殿，
一命侍鸞輿。
北闕妖氛滿，
西郊白露初。
涼風新過雁，
秋雨欲生魚。
農事空山裏，
眷言終荷鋤。

送長孫九侍御赴武威判官

馴馬新鑿蹄，
銀鞍被來好。
繡衣黃白郎，
騎向交河道。
問君適萬里，
取別何草草。
天子憂涼州，
嚴程到須早。
Luckily there is nothing wrong with Xiong’er,₁ but Jizi is the one I dote on most.² Approaching old age, my loneliness in travel is extreme, pained by these times, the chance to meet is remote. With graying hair I scurry in the tent palace, appointed, I attend on the phoenix-belled palanquin. The north palace towers are filled with demon vapors,³ but on the western meadows the white dew begins.⁴ A cool wind, wild geese newly passing, with autumn rains fish will be born. Farming in those deserted mountains— in reflection on what has happened, at last I’ll shoulder a hoe.

5.10

Seeing Off Attendant Censor Zhangsun (9), Setting Off for a Position as Administrative Assistant in Wuwei

The hooves of the dappled gray have recently been nailed,⁵ it has been covered well with a silver saddle. In brocade robes, a lad with seals yellow and white,⁶ rides off on the Cross Rivers Road.⁷ For this journey of ten thousand leagues I ask why do you take leave so hurriedly? “The Son of Heaven worries about Liangzhou, on a strict schedule I should arrive as soon as I can.”

₁ Xiong’er, “Bear-cub,” was the child name of his son Zongwen.
₂ Jizi, “Courser,” was the child name of his son Zongwu.
₃ That is, Chang’an is still occupied by rebels.
₄ The sign that autumn is coming.
₅ A dappled gray was conventionally associated with an office in the censorate.
₆ The brocade robe was a mark of Zhangsun’s office. The “yellow and white” are gold and silver, the seals of Zhangsun’s office.
₇ Cross Rivers (Yarkhoto) was in the northwestern frontier region; Wuwei (Liangzhou), where Zhangsun is headed, was north of Fengxiang.
送長孫九侍御赴武威判官

去秋群胡反，
不得無電掃。
此行收遺庶，
風俗方再造。

族父領元戎，
名聲國中老。
奪我同官良，
飄飄按城堡。
使我不能餐，
令我惡懷抱。
若人才思闊，
溟漲浸絕島。

尊前失詩流，
塞上得國寶。
皇天悲送遠，
雲雨白浩浩。

東郊尚烽火，
朝野色枯槁。
西極柱亦傾，
如何正穹昊。
Last autumn the Hu horde rebelled,\(^1\)
you cannot fail to sweep them away like lightning.
On this journey you will gather the remaining peasants,\(^2\)
and will then revive the customs there.
My great uncle is the high commander,\(^3\)
his reputation is as a senior of the realm.
The best of my colleagues has been snatched away,
swept afar, to inspect a fortress.
This makes me unable to eat,
and causes me unpleasant feelings.
Such a man’s talented thoughts are vast,
a dark sea inundating the most remote isles.
In drinking I have lost one of the poets,
while the frontier has gotten a jewel of the realm.
August Heaven grieves sending him so far,
clouds and rain are white and flooding.
Beacon fires are still on the Eastern Meadow,\(^4\)
people look gaunt and distressed in court and wilderness.
If even the pillar of the furthest west collapses,\(^5\)
how will it be possible to set aright the vault of sky?\(^2\)

---

1. The “Hu” here refers to the Tibetans.
2. Presumably the Han Chinese farming population.
3. Du Hongjian.
4. That is, Chang’an.
5. That is, the fall of much of Wuwei Commandery.
5.11

送從弟亞赴安西判官

南風作秋聲，
殺氣薄炎熾。
盛夏鷹隼擊，
時危異人至。
令弟草中來，
蒼然請論事。
詔書引上殿，
奮舌動天意。
兵法五十家，
爾腹為篋笥。
應對如轉丸，
疏通略文字。
經綸皆新語，
足以正神器。
宗廟尚為灰，
君臣俱下淚。
崆峒地無軸，
青海天軒轅。
西極最瘡痍，
連山暗烽燧。
5.11

Seeing Off My Cousin Ya on His Way to His Post as Administrative Assistant in Anxi

The south wind makes sounds of autumn,¹
the atmosphere of destruction presses the blazing heat.²
High summer, the bird of prey strikes,
when times are perilous, a rare person arrives.
My fine cousin comes from the countryside,
graying, you asked to discuss matters.
A summons drew you into the palace,
where, plying your tongue, you stirred the ruler’s mind.
Fifty military treatises
find storage in your belly.
You answered questions as smoothly as a rolling ball,
you explained, giving the gist of the texts.
You always said new things about managing affairs,
which could set the crown aright.
The ancestral temples are still in ashes,
ruler and ministers all shed tears.
The earth at Kongtong has lost its axis,
in Qinghai the heavens are topsy-turvy.³
The far west suffers the worst wounds,
linked mountains darken beacon fires night and day.

---

¹ The south wind is the summer wind.
² The “atmosphere of destruction” here is the coming autumn, though it also suggests the violence of the times.
³ Both Mount Kongtong and Qinghai (Kokonor and the surrounding area) were the territory of the military commissioner of Hexi. Presumably Du Fu is referring to the loss of Tang Central Asia territories to Tibet.
帝曰大布衣，
藉卿佐元帥。
坐看清流沙，
所以子奉使。
歸當再前席，
適遠非歷試。
須存武威郡，
為畫長久利。
孤峰石戴騶，
快馬金纏韁。
黃羊餌不羶，
蘆酒多還醉。
踴躍常人情，
慘澹苦士志。
安邊敵何有，
反正計始遂。
吾聞駕鼓車，
不合用騏驥。
龍吟迴其頭，
夾輔待所致。
The Emperor said: “Great Commoner,
We will rely on you to assist the Grand Commander.
Soon we will see the drifting sands cleared,
for this are you sent on a mission.
When you return, the ruler will draw his mat close to listen,¹
your going afar is not a series of tests.
You must preserve Wuwei Commandery,
and make plans for its enduring benefit.”
A lone peak, its rock bears the post route,
a mettlesome horse, gold wound around its bridle.
Brown wild sheep, not gamey when feasted on,
ale with a straw, if much, one still gets drunk.
The common man’s instinct is to leap forward,
a serious gentleman’s aims require brooding forethought.
What opponent can there be in pacifying the border?
when right is restored, your plans will be fulfilled.
I have heard that in hitching up the imperial drum carriage,
it is not right to use a fine steed.
The dragon-horse will moan, tuning its head,
awaiting to be brought to serve as assistant.²

---

1  *Jia Yi.
2  To the emperor.
送靈州李判官

羯胡腥四海，
回首一茫茫。
血戰乾坤赤，
氛迷日月黃。
將軍專策略，
幕府盛材良。
近賀中興主，
神兵動朔方。

奉送郭中丞兼太僕卿充隴右節度使三十韻
（郭英乂）

詔發西山將，
秋屯隴右兵。
淒涼餘部曲，
燁赫舊家聲。
雕鶚乘時去，
驊騮顧主鳴。
艱難須上策，
容易即前程。
5.12

Seeing Off Administrative Assistant Li of Lingzhou

The Jie Hu make the sea-girt world reek,
when I turn my head, all is a blur.
Bloody battle, Heaven and Earth reddened,
lost in vapors, sun and moon turn yellow.
The general has mastered tactical plans,
headquarters abounds with talent.
Close by I congratulate the Restoration’s ruler,
divine troops are stirring in Shuofang.1

5.13

Respectfully Seeing Off Guo Yingyi, Vice Censor in Chief and Chief Minister of the Court of the Imperial Stud, Going to Fill the Position of Military Commissioner of Longyou: Thirty Couplets

An edict sent forth the general of the western mountains
to muster Longyou’s troops this autumn.
The remaining cohorts were despondent,
blazing glory, the repute of his family.2
The falcon goes off with the season,3
the fine steed neighs, looking back to its lord.
In hard times the very best plans are needed,
with ease you set off on the journey ahead.

1 A Tang commandery under the charge of Guo Ziyi. Guo Ziyi and his Shuofang Army were the most effective forces in opposing An Lushan’s army.
2 Guo Yingyi’s father, Guo Zhiyun, had been military commissioner of Longyou. Guo Zhiyun had passed away, thus the soldiers left over from his command are “despondent.”
3 Birds of prey were associated with the Censorate; autumn was their season to strike.
斜日當軒蓋，
高風卷旆旌。
松悲天水冷，
沙亂雪山清。
和虜猶懷惠，
防邊不敢驚。
古來於異域，
鎮靜示專征。
燕薊奔封豕，
周秦觸駭鯨。
中原何慘黷，
餘孽尚縱橫。
箭入昭陽殿，
笳吟細柳營。
內人紅袖泣，
王子白衣行。
宸極祆星動，
園陵殺氣平。
空餘金碗出，
無復繰帷輕。
罘罳朝共落，
棆桷夜同傾。
The sinking sun lights up your carriage awning,
a strong wind ripples the streamers and flags.
Pines mourn in the cold of Tianshui,
sands roll in the clarity of the Mountains of Snow.
Barbarians, now on peaceful terms, still think on kind grace,¹
in protecting the frontier we dare not alarm them.
Since ancient days in those foreign regions
one guards the peace by demonstrating the authority to campaign.²
At Yan and Ji the huge boar ran amok,³
Zhou and Qin were struck by the rampant leviathan.⁴
How the Central Plain has been cast in darkness!—
and the remaining spawn still rage at will.
Arrows entered Zhaoyang Palace,
reed pipes moaned at Thinwillow Camp.⁵
Palace ladies sobbed on their red sleeves,
princes of the blood went in commoners’ clothes.
A demon constellation shook the Pole Star,
the aura of killing lay level over the imperial tombs.
The golden cups, remaining in vain, were taken,
no more, the tasseled curtains blowing lightly.⁶
Ruined ancestral temples, Heaven sent rain flying,
burning palaces, fires lasting to daylight.
The netting all fell down at dawn,⁷
camphor beams at night crashed down together.

¹ At the time Suzong had a peace with the Tibetans.
² That is, the general has authorization from the emperor to undertake military operations when required.
³ An Lushan.
⁴ Luoyang and Chang’an, taken by An Lushan’s troops.
⁵ Reed pipes were associated with the music of non-Han peoples. Thinwillow Camp, near Chang’an, was where the Han general Zhou Yafu camped his army to oppose a threat from the Xiongnu.
⁶ This describes the plundering of the imperial tombs. The golden cups were grave goods; the tasseled curtains were used in offerings to the spirit of the deceased ruler.
⁷ Nets over the doors and windows of the palace to keep out birds.
三月师逾整，
群胡势就烹。
瘡痍亲接战，
勇决冠垂成。
妙誉期元宰，
殊恩且列卿。
几时回节钺，
戮力扫欃枪。
圭窦三千士，
云梯七十城。
耻非齐说客，
祗似鲁诸生。
通籍微班忝，
周行独坐荣。
随肩趋漏刻，
短发寄簪纍。
径欲依刘表，
还疑厌禇衡。
渐衰那此别，
忍泪独含情。
废邑狐狸语，
空村虎豹争。
In three months the army is increasingly well-trained, the Hu horde is headed for the cooking fire. All scarred, you personally joined in battle, brave and decisive, you crown the impending achievement. For fine repute you are expected to become minister, by special grace you were ranked as one of the high lords. When will you bring back the standard and axe, unite our forces and sweep away the ill-omened comet? Three thousand gentlemen in holes in the wall, ladder to the clouds, seventy cities. I am ashamed I am not that Qi persuader, I only resemble those men of Lu. I, on the register, unworthy of even minor rank, you, in glory, seated alone among the Zhou officers. Shoulder to shoulder, I scurry at the appointed time, in my thinning hair I lodge hatpins and ribbons. I would straightaway become a dependent of Liu Biao, but I suspect he would grow sick of Mi Heng. Gradually aging, how can I at this parting hold back tears, alone keeping feelings within? In abandoned cities foxes and badgers talk, in deserted villages tigers and leopards contend.

1 Marks of military authority.
2 Confucius was supposed to have had three thousand disciples; this refers to scholars living in poverty.
3 The persuader Li Yiji told Liu Bang that he could take the seventy cities of Qi without effort. The scholars of the preceding line could render the same service now if they were recognized.
4 Li Yiji.
5 After Liu Bang (Han Gaozu, r. 206–195 BCE) established the Han, his advisor Shusuon Tong recommended that Confucian scholars of Lu be summoned to make Liu Bang’s court ritual.
6 This refers to Du Fu’s post as reminder.
7 Guangwudi (r. 25–57 CE) allowed three officers separate seats in court, one of which was Vice Censor in chief. This refers to Guo Yingyi’s rank.
8 To court.
9 Mi Heng.
人频坠塗炭，
公豈忘精誠。
元帥調新律，
前軍壓舊京。
安邊仍扈從，
莫作後功名。

送楊六判官使西蕃

送遠秋風落，
西征海氣寒。
帝京氛祲滿，
入世別離難。
絕域遙懷怒，
和親願結歡。
敕書憐贊普，
兵甲望長安。
宣命前程急，
惟良待士寬。
子雲清自守，
今日起為官。
垂淚方投筆，
傷時即據鞍。
The people often fall into disaster,
how could you forget your sincere commitment!
The supreme commander tunes the pitch-pipes anew,¹
the vanguard is hard upon the former capital.
After pacifying the border you will again join the entourage,
let your deeds and fame fall behind none.

5.14

Seeing Off Administrative Assistant Yang (6) On a Mission to Tibet

Sending you afar, the autumn wind sinks away,
the Kokonor weather is cold as you journey west.
Ill-omened vapors fill the imperial city,
in the human world parting is hard.
Even those farthest regions feel anger,²
by a marriage pact we wish to form good ties.³
An imperial letter expresses affection for the Btsan-po,⁴
those in armor gaze toward Chang’an.
A proclamation made that the journey ahead is urgent,
the good man treats his gentlemen generously.⁵
May our Ziyun be pure and guard himself,⁶
this day you have been raised to an official post.
Shedding tears, you now cast down your brush,⁷
and at once grasp your saddle, lamenting the times.

---
¹ Suzong’s son, Li Chu, the Prince of Guangping, was made supreme commander.
² “Tuning the pitch-pipes” is restoring political order.
³ Presumably anger at the rebel occupation of the capital.
⁴ The Btsan-po was the term for the ruler of Tibet.
⁵ Nan Juchuan, the head of the mission to Tibet.
⁶ Du Fu refers to Yang in terms of the Han writer *Yang Xiong (Ziyun).
⁷ “Casting down one’s brush” refers to giving up a scholar’s role for a military position, as Ban Chao did when he went to serve in the army in the Eastern Han.
儒衣山鳥怪，
漢節野童看。
邊酒排金醆，
夷歌捧玉盤。
草肥蕃馬健，
雪重拂廬乾。
慎爾參籌畫，
從兹正羽翰。
歸來權可取，
九萬一朝搏。

5.15
(See Appendix)

5.16
奉贈嚴八閣老
扈聖登黃閣，
明公獨妙年。
蛟龍得雲雨，
雕鶚在秋天。
客禮容疏放，
官曹可接聯。
Mountain birds will marvel at scholar robes,
16 boys in the wilds will look at the standards of Han.
Frontier ale, metal cups lined in a row,
Yi tribal songs, as they hold up jade plates.
The grasses succulent, Tibetan horses grow strong,
20 the snow may be heavy, but their felt tents are dry.
Be cautious contributing to making plans,
from this moment on straighten your wings.
When you return, you can take authority,
24 one morning spiraling upward ninety thousand leagues.1

5.15

(See Appendix)

5.16

Respectfully Presented to Yan (8) [Wu] of the Chancellery

In the imperial entourage you mount the yellow tower,2
a distinguished lord of singularly tender years.
A dragon who has gotten clouds and rain,
4 a falcon in the autumn skies.
Your treatment of guests allows a certain laxness,
our offices allow us to have contact.3

---

1  *Peng bird.
2  The “yellow tower” was a term for the Chancellery.
3  Yan Wu was the Supervising Secretary (jishi zhong) in the Chancellery; Du Fu’s post as Reminder was also a Chancellery post.
新詩句句好，
8 应任老夫传。

5.17

月

天上秋期近，
人间月影清。
入河蟾不没，
4 掷药兔长生。
只益丹心苦，
能添白发明。
干戈知满地，
8 休照国西营。

5.18

留别贾严二阁老两院补阙（得云字）

田园须暂往，
戎马惜离群。
去远留诗别，
4 愁多任酒醺。
一秋常苦雨，
今日始无云。
Each line of your recent poems is good,
you should let this old fellow pass them around.

_This is Du Fu’s earliest poem to Yan Wu, later Du Fu’s most supportive patron during his years in Sichuan._

### 5.17

**Moon**

Up in heaven the date of autumn nears,
the moon’s rays are clear in the human world.
Entering the Starstream, the Toad does not sink,
the Hare lives forever, pounding its herbs.¹
It only increases bitterness in a loyal heart,
it can add brightness to my white hairs.
If you know that the clash of arms fills the earth,
cease shining on the camp west of the capital.²

### 5.18

Detained on Parting by the Two Gentlemen of the Chancellery Jia [Zhi] and Yan [Wu] and the Rectifiers of Omissions of Both Ministries
(I got the rhyme _yun_)

I must go to my fields and gardens awhile,
the warhorse regrets leaving the herd.
Going off far, I leave a poem on parting,
my sadness great, I let myself get drunk on ale.
All autumn long we have suffered the rain,
today for the first time there are no clouds.

---

¹ The Hare, like the Toad, lives in the moon.
² The temporary capital at Fengxiang.
山路時吹角，
那堪處處聞。

5.19

晚行口號

三川不可到，
歸路晚山稠。 落雁浮寒水，
饑鳥集戍樓。 市朝今日異，
遠愧梁江總， 還家尚黑頭。

5.20

獨酌成詩

燈花何太喜，
酒綠正相親。 醉裏從為客，
詩成覺有神。 兵戈猶在眼，
儒術豈謀身。
On mountain roads a bugle blows now and then—
8 how can I bear to hear it wherever I go?

5.19

Traveling Late: Extempore

I cannot reach Three Rivers,¹
evening mountains thick on the road home.
Descending geese float on cold waters,
4 hungry crows roost on the tower of a fort.
These days both court and market have changed,
when will the death and destruction end?
I’m ashamed before Jiang Zong of Liang long ago,
8 when he went back home, his hair was still black.²

5.20

Pouring Ale Alone and Completing a Poem

Why are lamp sparks taken as such a joy?—³
right now I feel kinship with the green lees of ale.
When drunk I don’t care being a traveler,
4 when a poem is done I feel there was some divine being at work.
The clash of arms is still before my eyes,
how can one make a living with a scholar’s arts?

¹ Three Rivers County was near Fuzhou, where Du Fu had left his family.
² During the Hou Jing Rebellion the poet Jiang Zong (519–594) returned to his native Kuaiji.
³ Lamp sparks were believed to be auspicious signs.
徒步歸行，
苦被微官縛，
低頭愧野人。

5.21
徒步歸行
明公壯年值時危，
經濟實藉英雄姿。
國之社稷今若是，
武定禍亂非公誰。
鳳翔千官且飽飯，
衣馬不復能輕肥。
青袍朝士最困者，
白頭拾遺徒步歸。

人生交契無老少，
論交何必先同調。
妻子山中哭向天，
須公槧上追風騄。
I suffer being tied down by a minor post,
lowering my head, I am shamed before men of the wilds.

5.21
Returning Home On Foot: A Ballad¹

In years of your prime Your Excellency has met with perilous times,
running the state depends indeed on the qualities of a hero.
Since the dynasty’s altars of Earth and Grain are as they are right now,
who but you, sir, by martial measures can quell ruin and rebellion?
The thousand officials at Fengxiang for now are all well fed,
but no more can their clothes be light and their horses sleek.
Of the courtiers in gowns of blue, the one in the hardest straits²
is this white-haired Reminder going home on foot.

Friendships formed in human life take no account of age,
in considering association why need one put sameness of temper first?
In the mountains my wife and children weep facing the heavens,
from your stables I need the wind-chasing brown charger.

The minister Fang Guan, whose military ineptness had led to the defeat
of the imperial army at Chentao and Changban, fell from Suzong’s favor.
Du Fu was a friend and strong supporter of Fang Guan, and he spoke up in
Fang Guan’s defense, which weakened Du Fu’s own position at court. This
speaks well of Du Fu’s loyalty to friends, but very poorly of his judgment
in political matters. Du Fu asked Suzong to “ignore small things and note
greater things.” Losing a very large imperial army to a scholar’s folly is hard
to forgive as a “small thing.” Guo Ziyi, by contrast, lost many battles and,
deservedly, retained the emperor’s support. Fang Guan’s usefulness in the
crisis was a delusion that Suzong could not afford to entertain. Du Fu’s
politically stupid protest was initially forgiven on the grounds that one
should not stifle protest. It was forgiven but not forgotten. Du Fu never

¹ Original note: “Presented to Li [Siye], Lord Specially Advanced; composed on
the way from Fengxiang to Fuzhou, my route passing through Binzhou” 贈李特
進。自鳳翔赴鄜州, 途經邠州作.
² The blue gown is simple garb of commoners or students.
九成宮

蒼山入百里，
崖斷如杵臼。
曾宮憑風回，
岌嶪土囊口。
立神扶棟梁，
鑿翠開戶牖。
其陽產靈芝，
其陰宿牛斗。
紛披長松倒，
揭榦怪石走。
哀猿啼一聲，
客淚迸林藪。
荒哉隋家帝，
製此今頹朽。
向使國不亡，
焉為巨唐有。
雖無新增修，
尚置官居守。
realized that he was essentially wrong in his support of Fang Guan; he saw himself as the principled minister who risked all to speak the truth.

In this context Du Fu asked for and was granted permission to visit his family in Fuzhou, several hundred miles from Fengxiang. According to the original note, this poem was composed in Binzhou, after Du Fu had gone about one-third of the way on foot (and no doubt realized how difficult it would have been to make the entire journey on foot). Since horses had all been requisitioned for military use, Du Fu wrote the poem to General Li Siye, asking to borrow a horse.

5.22

Jiucheng Palace

I went into gray-green mountains a hundred leagues, the cliff was broken, like a mortar. This layered palace lies against whirling gusts, looming at the mouth of a hole in the earth. Gods were placed to support its rafters and beams, they bored into azure foliage to open doors and windows. The sunlit southern slopes produce numinous mushrooms; on shadowy north slope rest Oxherd and Dipper Fanning out, tall pines hang inverted, jutting jagged, weird rocks rush. Mournful gibbons give a single cry, and the traveler’s tears gush in woods and bog. Ungoverned indeed—that Sui emperor, constructing this, now fallen and rotting. Had he then not caused his domain to be destroyed, how could it have become the possession of the mighty Tang? Even though there are no recent additions or repairs, they still assign an officer to guard it.

---

1 Jiucheng Palace, so called because it was built on nine levels on a mountain, was originally the Renshou Palace of the Sui. It was refurbished in the reign of Taizong and served as a summer palace during his reign and that of his successor Gaozong.
巡非瑤水遠，
跡是雕牆後。
我行屬時危，
仰望嗟歎久。
天王守太白，
駐馬更搔首。

5.23

玉華宮

溪迴松風長，
蒼鼠竄古瓦。 
不知何王殿，
遺構絕壁下。 
陰房鬼火青，
壞道哀湍瀉。
萬籟真笙竽，
秋色正蕭灑。 
美人為黃土，
況乃粉黛假。
當時侍金輿，
故物獨石馬。 
憂來藉草坐，
浩歌淚盈把。
Imperial expeditions went not so far as Alabaster Pool,¹
his traces are here in the aftermath of carved walls.²
My travels belong to perilous times,
I look up and gaze at this, sighing long.
Our divine king holds a winter hunt on Mount Taibai,³
I halt my horse and still scratch my head.

5.23

Yuhua Palace⁴

The stream valley turns, the wind steady in the pines,
a gray rat scuttles under ancient tiles.
I know not what royal palace this was,
edifice abandoned beneath the sheer cliff.
In shadowy chambers ghost-fires are green,⁵
mournful rivulets pour over broken roadways.
The myriad vents are the true ocarinas,⁶
autumn colors are at their most brisk and aloof.
Its fair women have become the brown earth,
still more, their artifice of powder and mascara.
Waiting on the golden carriage back then,
of the former things there are only the stone horses.
Cares come, I smooth down the grass and sit,
sing out loud, tears filling my open hands.

---

¹ This refers to the expedition of Zhou King Mu to meet the Queen Mother of the West, who feasted him at Alabaster Pool in the Kunlun Mountains.
² That is, the extravagance of Sui Yangdi can be seen in the ornament of the ruins, which serve as evidence of why the Sui fell.
³ The “hunt” was a euphemism for an emperor in flight from his capital. Mount Taibai was close to Fengxiang, Suzong’s temporary capital.
⁴ Yuhua Palace had been constructed in 647 for Taizong as a summer palace to escape the heat of Chang’an. It was later made a temple, and was clearly abandoned by the time Du Fu saw it.
⁵ These are will-o-the-wisps.
⁶ The “myriad vents,” wanlai 萬籟, are those described in Zhuangzi, the holes on the earth whose sounds are the piping of Nature. These are opposed to the “ocarinas,” the sheng and yu, reed organs of a Chinese orchestra.
冉冉征途间，
誰是長年者。

5.24–26

羌村三首

Ⅰ

崢嶸赤雲西，
日腳下平地。
柴門鳥雀噪，
歸客千里至。
妻孥怪我在，
驚定還拭淚。
世亂遭飄蕩，
生還偶然遂。
鄰人滿牆頭，
感歎亦歔欷。
夜闌更秉燭，
相對如夢寐。

Ⅱ

晚歲迫偷生，
還家少歡趣。
Going steadily on in my travels,
none there is who can live long years.

5.24–26
Qiang Village

I

West of red clouds looming
sunbeams descend on level land.
At the ramshackle gate sparrows raise a din—
the traveler has come back across a thousand leagues.
My wife and children are amazed I survived,
when surprise settles, they wipe away tears.
I was tossed about in the world’s troubles,
now by luck I have managed to come back alive.
Neighbors fill the tops of the walls,
stirred to sighs, and even sobbing.
At night’s end I again take candle
and face you as if in a dream.

II

My late years press hard on a stolen life,
coming home, the pleasures are few.
羌村三首

娇儿不离膝，
畏我复却去。 惆昔好追凉，
故绕池边树。 萧萧北风劲，
抚事煎百虑。 撫事煎百虑。
赖知禾黍收， 赖知禾黍收，
已觉糟床注。 已觉糟床注。 如今足斟酌，
且用慰迟暮。 如今足斟酌，

III

群鸡正乱叫，
客至鸡斗争。 驱鸡上树木，
始闻叩柴荆。 父老四五人，
问我久远行。 问我久远行。 手中各有携，
倾榼浊复清。 倾榼浊复清。 莫辞酒味薄，
黍地无人耕。 黍地无人耕。 兵革既未息，
儿童尽东征。 儿童尽东征。
My dear son will not let go of my knees,
4 dreading I’ll go away again.
I recall how I used to love finding cool spots,
on purpose I circle the trees by the pool.
Whistling, the north wind blows strong,
8 considering matters, a hundred cares simmer.
Fortunately I know that the grain has been harvested,
and I already see pouring water into my mash-press.¹
If now there is enough to pour a drink,
12 for a while it will comfort my twilight years.

III

Now the flock of chickens squawks in confusion,
when visitors come, the chickens raise a ruckus.
I drive the chickens up into the trees,
4 and then hear a knock at my ramshackle gate.
Four or five old men
ask me about my long travels afar.
Each has brought something in hand,
8 and we tip the jars, both the thick and the clear.
“Don’t refuse our ale for being too thin—
there is no one to plow the millet lands.
And since the warfare has not yet ceased,
12 all our lads are on campaign in the east.”

¹ To make ale.
請為父老歌，
艱難愧深情。
歌罷仰天歎，
四座淚縱橫。

5.27

北征

皇帝二載秋，
閏八月初吉。杜子將北征，
蒼茫問家室。維時遭艱虞，
朝野少暇日。顧慚恩私被，
詔許歸蓬蓽。拜辭詔闕下，
怵惕久未出。雖乏諫諍姿，
恐君有遺失。君誠中興主，
經緯固密勿。東胡反未已，
臣甫憤所切。
Old men, let me make a song for you,
I am put to shame by your deep feelings in hardship.
When the song is done, I look up to heaven and sigh,
and tears stream freely from all around.

5.27

Journey North¹

Our Imperial Majesty’s second year, autumn,
first day of the month, an adjusted eighth,²
I, Master Du, was to set off on a journey north,
over vast uncertain space to see my family.
In these times we have met with great affliction,
free days are few in court or countryside.
I consider the undue grant of special grace,
how an edict permitted return to my humble home.
I went to the palace gates to take my leave,
shaken with awe, it was long ere I could go.
Though I lack the qualities for offering criticism,
I feared lest my ruler overlook some matter.
My ruler is true lord of the Restoration,
sedulously striving indeed to manage affairs.
The revolt of the eastern Hu is not over,³
and your subject Du Fu was stung with fury.

---

¹ Original note: “Composed when I had reached Fengxiang, and a personal edict from the emperor released me to go to Fuzhou”歸至鳳翔墨制放往鄜州作.
² This is August 20, 757. The calendar required the adjustment of an additional eighth month (a “lesser” eighth month) added before the eighth month proper.
³ That is, of An Lushan and Shi Siming.
揮涕戀行在，
道途猶恍惚。
乾坤含瘡痍，
憂虞何時畢。
靡靡逾阡陌，
人煙眇蕭瑟。
所遇多被傷，
呻吟更流血。
回首鳳翔縣，
旌旗晚明滅。
前登寒山重，
屢得飲馬窟。
邠郊入地底，
涇水中蕩潏。
猛虎立我前，
蒼崖吼時裂。
菊垂今秋花，
石戴古車轍。
青雲動高興，
幽事亦可悅。
山果多瑣細，
羅生雜橡栗。
或紅如丹砂，
或黑如點漆。
I wiped away tears, yearning for the court-in-exile, and my course was still an uncertain blur. Heaven and Earth bear wounds and scars, when will our misery ever cease? With slow steps I traversed the field paths, the smoke of hearths, far and faint in the gloom. Those I met had mostly suffered wounds, they groaned and kept on streaming with blood. I turned my head back to Fengxiang County,¹ late in the day its banners appeared and faded from view. I climbed the folds of cold mountains ahead, often finding watering holes for my horse. I entered Bin’s moor down at the base of the ground, the Jing’s waters churned through its midst. Fierce tigers stood before me, the gray slopes split when they roared. From chrysanthemums hung this autumn’s blooms, the rock bore the ruts of ancient carts. The blue clouds stirred high spirits, experiences in seclusion may still be enjoyed. Mountain berries in many tiny bits grew in stretches mixed with chestnut oaks. Some were red like cinnabar pebbles, others, black like spots of lacquer.

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¹ Fengxiang was the seat of the restoration government where Suzong held court.
雨露之所濡，
甘苦齊結實。
緬思桃源內，
益歎身世拙。

坡陀望鄜畤，
巖谷互出沒。
我行已水濱，
我僕猶木末。

鴟鳥鳴黃桑，
野鼠拱亂穴。
夜深經戰場，
寒月照白骨。

潼關百萬師，
往者散何卒。
遂令半秦民，
殘害為異物。
況我墮胡塵，
及歸盡華髮。
經年至茅屋，
妻子衣百結。

慟哭松聲回，
悲泉共幽咽。
平生所嬌兒，
顏色白勝雪。
Wherever the rain and dew brings moisture
fruits form, the sweet and the bitter alike.
I thought of Peach Blossom Spring, so remote,¹
increasing sighs over the blunders of my life.
From the rises I gazed to Fu's Altar,²
which emerged and sank away as I crossed valley and cliff.
I had already gone on to the shores of a stream,
and my servant was still in the tips of the trees.³
Owls screeched in the brown mulberry trees,
ground squirrels folded hands by their scattered dens.
In the depths of night I passed through a battlefield,
where the cold moon shone on white bones.
An army of a million at Tong Pass—
back then they scattered so swiftly!⁴
In consequence half the folk of Qin
were destroyed and made into non-human things.⁵
What's more I fell into the dust of the Hu,
coming home, my hair is all streaked with gray.
A year has passed, and I reach my thatched cottage,⁶
wife and children's clothes patched in a hundred places.
Stirred to weeping, the sound of pines replies,
and mournful streams join our secret sobs.
The son whom I always have doted on,
his complexion is whiter than snow.

¹ *Peach Blossom Spring.
² Fu's Altar, by legend constructed by Duke Wen of Qin, was a mound that marked Fuzhou, where Du Fu's family was located.
³ 'That is, the servant is behind him, higher up the slope.
⁴ This refers to the disastrous defeat of the hastily assembled imperial army outside of Tong Pass.
⁵ 'That is, ghosts, not having been buried with the proper ceremonies.
⁶ 'That is, a year since he left his family in Fuzhou and went back to Chang'an, at the point when it fell to An Lushan's forces.
見耶背面啼，
垢膩膩腳不襟。
床前兩小女，
補綴才過膝。
海圖拆波濤，
舊繡移曲折。
天吳及紫鳳，
顛倒在袴褌。
老夫情懷惡，
嘔泄臥數日。
那無囊中帛，
救汝寒凜慄。
粉黛亦解苞，
衾裯稍羅列。
瘦妻面復光，
癡女頭自櫛。
學母無不為，
曉妝隨手抹。
移時施朱鉛，
狼藉畫眉闊。
生還對童稚，
似欲忘飢渴。
問事競挽鬚，
誰能即瞋喝。
Seeing his dad, he turns his face away weeping, filthy and greasy, no socks on his feet.
By the bed my two young daughters have a patchwork that goes just below their knees.
An ocean scene with its waves torn, a former embroidery, its sequence of panels shifted.¹
Tianwu and the Purple Phoenix² were upside down on their short tunics.
I, the old man, was feeling bad and lay several days with vomiting and diarrhea.
Of course I had money in my purse to save you from shivering in the cold.
I also undid packets of powder and mascara, sheets and blankets were amply arrayed.
A light returned to my gaunt wife’s face, and the innocent girls combed their own hair.
They imitated their mother in everything, with morning make-up smeared on liberally.
After some time they put on rouge and painted wide brows helter-skelter.
Back alive, I face these children and almost forget my hunger and thirst.
Asking what happened, scrambling to pull my whiskers who could glare or scold them just then?

---
¹ That is, an old embroidery with a coherent sequence of scenes has been cut up into pieces for the girls’ clothes.
² Tianwu was an ocean god.
翻思在賊愁，
甘受雜亂聒。
新歸且慰意，
生理焉得說。
至尊尚蒙塵，
幾日休練卒。
仰看天色改，
旁覺妖氣豁。
陰風西北來，
慘澹隨回鶚。
其王願助順，
其俗善馳突。
送兵五千人，
驅馬一萬匹。
此輩少為貴，
四方服勇決。
所用皆鷹騰，
破敵過箭疾。
聖心頗虛佇，
時議氣欲奪。
伊洛指掌收，
西京不足拔。
官軍請深入，
蓄銳可俱發。
I think back when I was among the rebels
and now gladly accept all this chaos and noise.
Being newly returned comforts me for a while—
how could I bring myself to discuss our livelihood?
His Majesty still is coated with exile’s dust,
how soon will we stop the training of troops?
I look up and observe Heaven’s aspect changing,
sensing how baleful vapors clear all around.
From the Northwest comes a shadowy wind,¹
somberly following the Uighurs.
Their king wants them to serve and aid,
by custom they excel in the cavalry charge.
They have sent us five thousand troops,
and driven along ten thousand horses.
Of this sort a few are valuable,²
all the world admires their resolute bravery.
They always use “hawk-bounders,”³
that smash the enemy swifter than an arrow.
His Highness’s heart prefers to wait, doing nothing,
all spirit is virtually lost in current policy debates.
Luoyang can be taken as easily as pointing to the palm,⁴
the Western Capital is not even worth seizing.
The Imperial Army begs to strike deeply,
their stored up sharpness should be unleashed en masse.

¹ This is the emanation of Suzong’s Uighur allies.
² This can be read politely (“even a few are valuable”) or less politely (“the fewer the better.”)
³ Xiao Difei suggests that this refers to the cavalry.
⁴ “Pointing to the palm” is a set phrase for obviousness or ease.
此舉開青徐，
旋瞻略恆碣。
昊天積霜露，
正氣有肅殺。

禍轉亡胡歲，
勢成擒胡月。
胡命其能久，
皇綱未宜絕。

憶昨狼狽初，
事與古先別。
姦臣竟菹醢，
同惡隨蕩析。

不聞夏殷衰，
中自誅褒妲。
周漢獲再興，
宣光果明哲。

桓桓陳將軍，
仗鉞奮忠烈。
微爾人盡非，
於今國猶活。
With this move we can clear Qingzhou and Xuzhou,\(^1\) then we can immediately swallow Heng and Jie.\(^2\) Frost and dew gather in the vast heavens, there is stern deadliness in the atmosphere of justice.\(^3\) Disaster turns to the Year for Destroying the Hu; the situation produces the Month for Seizing the Hu. How can the Hu’s fated span last long?— it is not fitting that Imperial Rule be cut off. I think back to when the panic first began, what happened was different from all precedent. The corrupt minister at last was chopped to mince,\(^4\) and his evil partners were then swept away. We would never have heard of Xia or Yin’s decline had they executed Bao and Da midway.\(^5\) Zhou and Han achieved a second rising— Xuan and Guang were truly discerning and wise.\(^6\) Undaunted was General Chen Xuanli,\(^7\) with spear and axe, he exercised loyal ardor. Were it not for you, the people would all be gone, yet the dynasty still lives unto this day.

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1 Qingzhou and Xuzhou were two prefectures in the east, deep in An Lushan’s territory.
2 Heng and Jie are mountains in the northeast.
3 “Stern deadliness,” *susha* 肅殺, is an attribute of autumn, the season of war and punishment. The *qi* (“atmosphere”) is both the weather and the spiritual force of the season.
4 The reference is to Yang Guozhong.
5 Daji 妲己 was the consort of Zhou, the last Shang king. To Da and Bao were attributed the fall of the Shang (Yin) and Western Zhou respectively. The analogy here is clearly to Lady Yang the Noble Consort, who, in contrast, was ordered to commit suicide, by which, to Du Fu’s mind, the dynasty was saved.
6 The references are to King Xuan, who restored the Western Zhou’s power, and to Guangwudi, the founder of the Eastern Han. The comparison is to Suzong.
7 Chen Xuanli, the general of the guard who compelled the execution of Yang Guozhong and Lady Yang the Noble Consort.
行次昭陵

凄凉大同殿，
寂寞白兽闥。
都人望翠华，
佳气向金闕。
园陵固有神，
扫灑数不缺。
煌煌太宗业，
树立甚宏达。

5.28

行次昭陵

舊俗疲庸主，
群雄问独夫。
讖归龙凤质，
威定虎狼都。
天属尊尧典，
神功协禹谟。
风云随绝足，
日月继高衢。
文物多师古，
朝廷半老儒。
Cold and dreary is Datong Palace, desolate is the White Beast Gate. The people in the capital gaze for the Kingfisher Glory, auspicious vapors head toward the gilded palace turrets. Truly divinity hangs about the imperial tombs, rites of sweeping and sprinkling will not be omitted. Glorious is the legacy of Taizong—what he established is exceedingly vast and enduring.

5.28

Reaching Zhaoling on My Travels

Olden ways were worn down by undistinguished rulers, a host of heroes called the Lone Man to account. Prophecies pointed to one of dragon and phoenix nature, his might settled the capital with its tigers and jackals. His blood relations revered the “Canon of Yao,” in divine achievement he assisted in “The Plan of Yu.” Wind and clouds followed the fleetest feet, sun and moon continued on the high streets of Heaven. In cultural matters he often followed antiquity, half of his court were old Confucian scholars.

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1 Datong Palace was a hall in the Tang palace compound of Chang’an. White Beast Hall is properly White Tiger Hall, renamed because of the taboo on Tang Taizu’s name. This was a hall (and gate) in the Han palace; Han palace names were liberally transferred to places in the Tang palace.
2 The kingfisher feathers mark the imperial standards and would be a sign of the emperor’s return to Chang’an.
3 Zhaoling was the tomb of Taizong.
4 The “Lone Man” is the emperor, in this case, Sui Yangdi.
5 Li Shimin, Taizong.
6 Chang’an.
7 In the “Canon of Yao” in the Classic of Documents, Yao yields the throne to Shun, and Shun to Yu. This refers to Taizong’s father Li Yuan abdicating to Taizong.
8 The “Plan of Yu” in the Classic of Documents, praises the achievements of Yu.
9 The “fleetest feet” is Taizong as a fine horse. The clouds follow the dragon, and the wind follows the tiger, referring to Taizong’s “dragon and tiger” qualities.
10 Ritual and music, sometimes particularly involving ceremonial robes.
直词宁戮辱，
往者灾犹降，
指麾安率土，
往者灾犹降，
指麾安率土，

往者灾犹降，
往者灾犹降，
指麾安率土，

5.29

草昧英雄起，
謳歌歴数归。
风尘三尺剑，

草昧英雄起，
謳歌歴数归。
风尘三尺剑，

草昧英雄起，
謳歌歴数归。
风尘三尺剑，

草昧英雄起，
謳歌歴数归。
风尘三尺剑，
He never shamed or killed those who criticized him directly,
the road for the virtuous was not hard-going.
Back then disasters still descended,\(^1\)
the gasps of the common folk were not yet relieved.
His directions settled all the land.
washing all clean, he soothed the Vast Forge.\(^2\)
The bold man is saddened at his tomb mound,
the recluse bows at Tripod Lake.\(^3\)
In his jade burial suit he ascended in the morning,
the armored horses sweat, ever charging.\(^4\)
Among cypress and pine I gaze on the empty halls,
in dust and sand I stand on the darkened road.
Vast distance now from the day he founded the dynasty,
my flowing resentment fills the folds of the mountains.

\section*{5.29}

Once Again on Passing by Zhaoling

In those dark beginnings a hero arose,
the imperial succession came with chants and songs.
A three-foot sword in dust of war,
alts of Earth and Grain, one man in armor.
To assist his glory, he entrusted men of civil virtue,
in grand continuation he withdrew war's majesty.

\begin{flushleft}
\footnotesize
1 Drought and locusts.
2 Heaven and Earth.
3 Where the dragon carried the Yellow Emperor to Heaven after he cast the famous tripods. Here it refers to Zhaoling.
4 These are the stone funerary horses.
\end{flushleft}
聖圖天廣大，
宗祀日光輝。
陵寢盤空曲，
熊羆守翠微。
再窺松柏路，
還見五雲飛。

5.30

憶昔避賊初，
北走經險艱。
夜深彭衙道，
月照白水山。
盡室久徒步，
逢人多厚顏。
參差谷鳥吟，
不見遊子還。     
癡女飢咬我，
啼畏虎狼聞。     
懷中掩其口，
反側聲愈嗔。     
小兒強解事，
故索苦李餐。
Sagely planning as extensive as Heaven,
in ancestral sacrifice, the light of the sun.
The imperial tomb winds along a deserted bend,
troops like bears protect the mountain greenery.
Again I peer at the road through cypress and pine
and still see five-colored clouds flying.¹

5.30

Pengya: A Ballad

I recall back when we first fled the rebels,
through hardship and danger we hurried north.
The night was deep on Pengya road,
the moon shone on Whitewater Mountain.
The whole household had traveled long on foot,
and most of those we met were shamelessly unfeeling.
Valley birds droned here and there,
we saw no travelers going back the way we came.
My baby daughter bit at me in her hunger,
I feared tigers and wolves would hear her cries.
I held her to my chest and covered her mouth,
she twisted and turned, her voice even more upset.
My little son pretended he knew what to do,
he kept seeking bitter plums to eat.

¹ Auspicious clouds.
彭衙行

一旬半雷雨，
泥濘相牽攀。
既無禦雨備，
徑滑衣又寒。
有時經契闊，
竟日數里間。
野果充餱糧，
卑枝成屋椽。
早行石上水，
暮宿天邊煙。
少留同家窪，
欲出蘆子關。
故人有孫宰，
高義薄曾雲。
延客已曛黑，
張燈啟重門。
煖湯渥我足，
翦紙招我魂。
從此出妻孥，
相視涕闌干。
眾雛爛熳睡，
喚起霑盤餐。
誓將與夫子，
永結為弟昆。
Half the past ten days it had thundered and rained,
we pulled each other along through the mud and mire.
Having made no provision against the rain,
the path was slippery and our clothes were cold.
At times we went through particular hardship,
a whole day spent covering just a few leagues.
Wild fruits served as our provisions,
low branches became the beams of our roof.
Early we walked through water on rocks,
at dusk we would stay at hearth-smoke seen on the horizon.
We remained for a while in Tongjia Swamp,
about to go through Luzi Barrier.
Among my old friends there was one Steward Sun,
whose high sense of right touched tiered clouds.
He welcomed us as night’s blackness fell,
lit lanterns and opened his gates.
He warmed waters to bathe our feet,
and cut paper streamers to call back our souls.
After this he brought in his wife and children,
whose tears streamed down on seeing us.
All my brood was sleeping soundly,
he woke them and graced them with a meal.
I vow that together with you, sir,
we shall form the bond of brothers forever.
遂空所坐堂，
安居奉我欢。
谁肯艰难际，
豁达露心肝。
别来岁月周，
胡羯仍构患。
何当有翅翎，
飞去堕尔前。

5.31
喜闻官军已临贼境二十韵

胡虜潜京县，
官军擁贼壕。
鼎鱼猶假息，
穴蟻欲何逃。
帐殿罗玄冕，
轅门照白袍。
秦山当警蹕，
汉苑入旌旄。
路失羊腸险，
云横雉尾高。
五原空壁垒，
八水散风涛。
Then he emptied the hall where we sat,
offering me the joy of secure lodging.
Who else would be willing in such troubled times
to show his good heart so openly?
Since we parted a full year has run its course,
and the Hu still work our ruin.
When shall I ever have the wings
to fly off and land before you?

In the ninth month the Crown Prince, later Daizong, led an imperial army, along with his Uighur contingent, to the west of Chang’an, ready to give battle. A rebel counterattack was foiled by the Uighurs, and the victorious imperial army recovered Chang’an.

5.31

Happy at the News that the Imperial Army is Already at the Edge of Rebel Territory: Twenty Couplets

The Hu barbarians hide away in the capital district,
the imperial army surrounds the rebel moats.
Fish in a kettle, still hanging on to their last breaths,
4 ants in their hole, where will they flee?
In the tent palace black headgear lines up,¹
at headquarters gate white gowns shine.²
One should clear the imperial way in Qin’s mountains,
8 our banners will enter the parks of Han.
His road will avoid those of sheep-gut perils,³
the pheasant-tail fans raised high like clouds across the sky.⁴
On the five plains the forts will lie empty,
12 the wind-blown billows will dissipate on the eight rivers.⁵

1 "The officials at Suzong’s temporary headquarters.
2 "The Uighur cavalry brought to help.
3 "That is, Suzong will come directly and openly to the capital, perhaps in contrast to his father Xuanzong’s tortuous route in flight to Chengdu.
4 "The pheasant tail fans were part of the imperial regalia.
5 "That is, the region around Chang’an will be peaceful."
今日看天意，
游魂贷尔曹。
乞降那更得，
尚诈莫徒劳。
元帅归龙种，
司空握豹韬。
前军苏武节，
左将吕虔刀。
兵气回飞鸟，
威声没巨蠹。
戈鋋开雪色，
弓矢向秋毫。
天步艱方盡，
时和运更遭。
谁云遗毒螫，
已是沃腥臊。
睿想丹墀近，
神行羽卫牢。
花门腾绝漠，
拓羯渡临洮。
此辈感恩至，
赢俘何足操。
Happy at the News that the Imperial Army is Already at the Edge of Rebel Territory

Today I look on the will of Heaven,
how can those wandering souls forgive you?¹
No more chance to beg to surrender,
don’t waste your efforts in still trying to fool us.
The high command goes to the dragon spawn,²
the Minister of Works clasps the “Leopard Bowcase.”³
The vanguard shows the standards of Su Wu,⁴
the general of the left has Lü Qian’s sword.⁵
The soldiers’ aura turns back birds in flight,
repute of their awe makes the huge turtle dive underwater.
Pike and steel lance reveal the color of snow,
bow and arrow aim at the wisp in autumn.⁶
In the course of fate troubles now end,
in the cycles we again meet a time of harmony.
Who says that their poison will linger on?—
we already rinsing the stench away.
The Cinnabar Courtyard is near to royal concerns,
moving swift as spirits, the imperial guard is firm.
Those of Huamen have bounded over remote deserts,⁷
the Tuojie have crossed Lintao.⁸
Such as these have come, touched by imperial grace,
how can those feeble slaves grapple with them?⁹

¹ The souls of those killed in the rebellion will not forgive the rebels.
² Li Chu, Prince of Guangping and Suzong’s eldest son, later Daizong.
³ Guo Ziyi, the Minister of Works, was second in command. The “Leopard Bowcase” was one of the military classics and refers to Guo Ziyi’s knowledge of strategy.
⁴ Under the command of Li Siye, earlier described as Su Wu returning from Xiongnu captivity with the Han standards.
⁵ This is Pugu Huaien. In the Jin, Lü Qian had a sword that was said to be suitable for someone who was to become one of the Three Lords; Lü Qian gave it to Wang Xiang. The implication is that Pugu Huaien will rise to high office.
⁶ The wisp in autumn air was a proverbially tiny thing; this suggests the precision of the archers.
⁷ The Uighurs.
⁸ Another Central Asian people that came to the aid of the Tang.
⁹ That is, how can the rebel army deal with the Uighurs and Tuojie contingents of Tang forces?
鋒先衣染血，
騎突劍吹毛。
喜覺都城動，
悲憐子女號。
家家賣釵釧，
只待獻春醪。

5.32–34

收京三首

I

仙仗離丹極，
妖星照玉除。
須為下殿走，
不可好樓居。
暫屈汾陽駕，
聊飛燕將書。
依然七廟略，
更與萬方初。

II

生意甘衰白，
天涯正寂寥。
The uniforms of the vanguard are stained with blood,
a windblown hair will split on the swords of the attack cavalry.
They are delighted at how the capital is stirred,
they take pity on the cries of those boys and girls.
Every household is selling hairpins and bracelets
waiting only to present the spring ale.

5.32–34
Retaking the Capital

I
The immortal Guard left the Cinnabar Pole Star,¹
demon stars shone on the steps of jade
He was compelled to leave the palace and run,
he could not just stay, clinging to his mansion.²
For a while the carriage turned aside to Fenyang,³
at Liao a letter to the Yan general was sent flying.⁴
The plans of the seven ancestral temples are as they were,
one again a new beginning for the ten thousand regions.

II
I accept frailty and white hair in my life,
in lonely isolation now at the ends of the earth.⁵

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¹ The palace.
² That is, Xuanzong had to flee and could not live in his palace in peace.
³ Yao once met four Daoists on the north bank of the Fen (Fenyang) and forgot that he was a ruler. This again refers to Xuanzong’s flight from Chang’an.
⁴ In the Warring States the Kingdom of Yan held one of the cities in Qi. The persuader Lu Zhonglian shot an arrow into the city with a letter. When he read it, the Yan general killed himself. An Lushan’s army was from Yan, thus the rebels were encouraged to surrender.
⁵ This is hyperbolic; Du Fu is in Fuzhou with his family.
忽聞哀痛詔，
又下聖明朝。
羽翼懷商老，
文思憶帝堯。
叨逢罪己日，
沾灑望青霄。

III

汗馬收宮闕，
春城鏟賊壕。
賞應歌杕杜，
歸及薦櫻桃。
雜虜橫戈數，
功臣甲第高。
萬方頻送喜，
無乃聖躬勞。
All at once I hear of an edict of remorse\(^1\)
once again coming from our sage court.
I think on Mount Shang’s old men, supporting the throne,\(^2\)
his cultured thoughts recall Emperor Yao.
I humbly meet a day of our lord’s self-blame,
shedding tears I gaze toward the blue wisps of cloud.\(^3\)

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III

Sweating horses retook the palace,
in the spring city the rebels’ trenches are scraped flat.
In reward they will surely sing “Russet Pear,”\(^4\)
the return is in time to present cherries.\(^5\)
Federate barbarians’ brandished pikes are thick,\(^6\)
the mansions of meritorious officials rise high.
Good news is brought often from all quarters,
His Majesty has no choice but to personally reward them.

After Chang’an and Luoyang were retaken, those who had willingly or unwillingly accepted posts in An Lushan’s government were brought back to Luoyang to face charges. The most serious collaborators were executed; some, like the poet Wang Wei 王維 (d. 761), were pardoned. Most were sent into administrative exile. Among the last group was Du Fu’s old friend Zhen Qian.

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1 Suzong’s edict blaming himself.
2 *Four Graybeards.*
3 *The court.*
4 A poem from the *Classic of Poetry* expressing appreciation of the efforts of soldiers who had been on campaign.
5 In mid-summer the emperor ritually presents cherries to his officials.
6 Suzong’s Uighur allies.
5.35

送鄭十八虔貶台州司戶，傷其臨老陷賊之故，闕為面別，情見於詩

鄭公樗散鬢成絲，
酒後常稱老畫師。
万里傷心嚴譴日，
百年垂死中興時。

蒼惶已就長途往，
邂逅無端出餞遲。
便與先生應永訣，
九重泉路盡交期。

5.36

臘日

臘日常年暖尚遙，
今年臘日凍全消。
侵陵雪色還萱草，
漏泄春光有柳條。

縱酒欲謀良夜醉，
還家初散紫宸朝。
口脂面藥隨恩澤，
翠管銀罈下九霄。
5.35

Seeing Off Zheng Qian (18) Who Has Been Banished to the Post of Revenue Manager in Taizhou. I Feel Bad That, Nearing Old Age, This Has Happened Because He Fell into the Hands of the Rebels. I Failed to be Able to Part Face to Face, But My Feelings Are Revealed in the Poem

Master Zheng, useless chu tree, his locks turned to white silk,\(^1\) after drinking he always claims that he is an old painter. Ten thousand leagues, it pains my heart, this day of stern banishment, approaching death in our hundred-year span, at the time of the Restoration.

In confused haste he has gone to set off on that long journey, unexpectedly it happened that I was too late for your parting feast. Even if with you, sir, this parting is forever, below on the roads of the Nine Springs we will always have times to share friendship.

\emph{Du Fu’s brief period in imperial service after the recapture of Chang’\text{"an} was one of the happiest periods of his life.}

5.36

The La Festival\(^2\)

On the La Festival in ordinary years warm weather is still far away, this year on the La Festival the ice has entirely melted. Subduing the color of snow the yellow daylily returns, in the light of spring leaking through there are fronds of willows.

To have ale as I please I will plan a good night to get drunk, I return home, having just concluded dawn court at Zichen Palace. a chap-balm for lips and face cream came with imperial grace, in an azure tube and silver ewer descending from the nine-tiered heavens.

\(^1\) In “Xiaoyao you” of \textit{Zhuangzi} the useless chu tree is ignored because its timber cannot be used.

\(^2\) The eighth day of the twelfth month.
賈至，早朝大明宮呈兩省僚友

銀燭薰天紫陌長，
禁城春色曉蒼蒼。
千條弱柳垂青瑣，
百囀流鶯繞建章。
劍佩聲隨玉墀步，
衣冠身惹御爐香。
共沐恩波鳳池上，
朝朝染翰侍君王。

5.37

奉和賈至舍人早朝大明宮

五夜漏聲催曉箭，
九重春色醉仙桃。
旌旂日暖龍蛇動，
宮殿風微燕雀高。
朝罷香煙攜滿袖，
詩成珠玉在揮毫。
欲知世掌絲綸美，
池上于今有鳳毛。
Jia Zhi 賈至 (718–772) composed a poem on the dawn court gathering in the newly restored court. The companion piece by Du Fu survives, along with the companion pieces by Wang Wei and Cen Shen.

Jia Zhi, Dawn Court at Daming Palace, for My Colleagues in the Two Ministries

Silver candles scent the heavens, stretching along on purple streets, colors of spring in the Forbidden City, lush in the morning.

A thousand fronds of pliant willows hang by blue chain-patterned gates, with a hundred warbling orioles circling Jianzhang Palace.

The sounds of waist-strung swords follow steps on the pavements of jade,

bodies in caps and gowns tease wisps of incense from imperial braziers.

Together we bathe in waves of Grace by Phoenix Pool,

at every dawn court dipping our brushes to serve our Lord and Ruler.

5.37

A Companion Piece For Drafter Jia Zhi’s “Dawn Court at Daming Palace”¹

Night’s fifth watch, the water-clock’s sound speeds its morning marker, colors of spring in the ninefold palace make immortal peaches drunk.

Sun warm on pennons and streamers, dragons and serpents stir, by palace halls the breeze is light, swallows and sparrows fly high.

Dawn court done, the scented smoke you carry filling your sleeves, the poem finished, pearls and jade are right on your flourished brush.

If you want to see generations in charge of lovely silken lines,² to this day on the pool there is phoenix down.³

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¹ Original note: “The Drafter’s father was in charge of edicts” 舍人先世掌絲綸.
² The “lovely silken lines” is the rhetorical elegance in drafting edicts
³ “Phoenix Pool” was associated with the Secretariat, thus with the grand counselor. Jia Zhi was a Drafter in the Secretariat (zhongshu sheren 中書舍人), and Jia Zhi had referred to Phoenix Pool in his poem. Jia Zhi’s father, Jia Ceng, had also held the same post, thus “to this day” suggests the son is continuing his father’s achievements.