9.1

發同谷縣

賢有不黔突，
聖有不暖席。
況我飢愚人，
焉能尚安宅。
始來茲山中，
休駕喜地僻。
奈何迫物累，
一歲四行役。
忡忡去絕境，
杳杳更遠適。
停驂龍潭雲，
回首虎崖石。
臨岐別數子，
握手淚再滴。
交情無舊深，
窮老多慘戚。
平生懶拙意，
偶值棲遁跡。
去住與願違，
仰慚林間翮。
9.1

Setting Out from Tonggu County¹

There was a worthy man whose chimney never was black, there was a sage whose mat was never warm.²
More so I, hungry and foolish man, how can I long be at rest in a house?
When first I came to these mountains, I halted my coach, delighting in the remoteness.
I was inevitably driven by entanglements of things to forced travels four times in one year.
Careworn, I leave this cut-off land, going even farther into faint distances.
I halted my team by Dragon Tarn’s clouds, turned my head at Tiger Slope’s rocks.
At the crossroads I parted from several men, tears fell once again as we clasped hands.
These friendships were neither old nor deep, but they were very sad for a poor old man.
All my life I’ve been lazy and clumsy, by chance I found a place to lodge and hide away.
Going or staying always goes counter to my wish,
I’m put to shame by the wings above in the woods.³

After staying in Tonggu less than a month, on December 24, 759, Du Fu decided to move the family south to Chengdu. The mountains of this journey were far more rugged than those encountered going from Qinzhou. Travelers often had to use what is commonly translated as “plankways,” narrow wooden paths built into the sides of steep mountain slopes. At the bottom were always seething rivers, to be crossed either by boat or suspension

¹ Original note: “An account of my journey on the first day of the twelfth month of the second year of the Quanyuan Reign from Longyou to Jiannan” 乾元二年十二月一日自隴右赴儰南紀行.
² Not staying in one place long enough to have the chimney blacken from cooking smoke or the mat become warm was the proverbial attributes of Confucius and Mozi.
³ The birds fly off but always have a place to which to return.
木皮嶺

首路粟亭西，
尚想鳳皇村。
季冬攜童稚，
辛苦赴蜀門。
南登木皮嶺，
艱險不易論。
汗流被我體，
祁寒為之暄。
遠岫爭輔佐，
千巖自崩奔。
始知五嶽外，
別有他山尊。
仰干塞大明，
俯入裂厚坤。
再聞虎豹鬥，
屢跼風水昏。
高有廢閣道，
摧折如短轅。
下有冬青林，
石上走長根。
bridges. Leaving Qinzhou, Du Fu mentions his wagon; he does not mention it in the journey to Chengdu—though he did take his horse.

9.2

Bark Ridge

I set out on the road west of Chestnut Pavilion,
still envisaging Phoenix Village.
Winter’s last month, the children in hand,
in great hardship we go to the gateway to Shu.
To the south we climb Bark Ridge,
its steep peril, not easy to tell.
Streams of sweat cover my body,
making it balmy in the harsh cold.
Distant peaks contend to flank and support it,
a thousand cliffs are like breaking waves.
Now I know that beyond the Five Great Peaks,
there are other mountains worthy of awe.
Intruding upward, they block the great Lights,¹
entering downward, they split the thick Earth.
Repeatedly I hear tigers and leopards fighting,
I’m often cramped in the haze of wind and waters.
High above is an abandoned plankway,
broken off like a short carriage shaft.
Below are groves of chinaberry,
whose long roots run over the rock.

---

¹ Sun and moon.
白沙渡

西崖特秀发，
焕若灵芝繁。
润聚金碧气，
清无沙土痕。

憶觀崑崙圖，
目擊玄圃存。
對此欲何適，
默傷垂老魂。

9.3

白沙渡

畏途随长江，
渡口下绝岸。
差池上舟楫，
杳窕入云汉。

天寒荒野外，
日暮中流半。
我马向北嘶，
山猿饮相喚。

水清石磥磥，
沙白灘漫漫。
迥然洗愁辛，
多病一疏散。
The west slope emerges especially prominent, glowing as if with an abundance of magic mushrooms. Moist with clustering vapors, gold and emerald, clear without tracks of sand and dirt. I recall viewing a picture of the Kunlun Mountains,¹ what meets my eyes here are the Mysterious Gardens. Facing this, where am I going?— it silently wounds this soul approaching old age.

---

9.3

White Sands Crossing

The fearsome track follows the long river, we go down the sheer bank at the crossing. We get in boats on the uneven shore, entering the Milky Way, faint and far. The sky is cold in this far wilderness, by twilight we are halfway across the current. My horse faces the north and neighs, mountain gibbons drink, calling to one another. The water is clear, the rocks are heaped in piles, the sands white, rapids spread far and wide. Sadness and bitterness are washed far away, my frequent illness is entirely dispelled.

---

¹ A range to the northwest in Central Asia, identified as the dwelling of gods and immortals.
高壁抵巖峯，
洪濤越凌亂。
臨風獨回首，
攬轡復三歎。

9.4

水會渡

山行有常程，
中夜尚未安。
微月沒已久，
崖傾路何難。

大江動我前，
洶若溟渤寬。
篙師暗理楫，

歌笑輕波瀾。
霜濃木石滑，
風急手足寒。

入舟已千憂，
陟巘仍萬盤。
回眺積水外，
始知眾星乾。

遠遊令人瘦，
衰疾慚加餐。
High cliffs face us, looming,
as we cross the seething turmoil of huge waves.
Facing the wind, alone I turn my head,
clap the reins and sigh repeatedly.

9.4

Converging Waters Crossing

Mountain journeys have regular stages,
but by midnight we still had not rested.
The crescent moon had long sunken away,
the slope tipped downward, how hard was the road!
The great river stirred before me,
surging as broad as a dark sea.
A boatman plied his oars unseen,
laughing and singing, making light of the waves.
The frost was thick, trees and rocks slick,
the wind blew hard, hands and feet cold.
Getting on the boat, I already felt a thousand cares,
now mounting the summit, ten thousand more turnings.
Only when peering back over the massed waters
did I know that all the stars were dry.
Far traveling makes a person lean,
frail and sick, I really should be eating more.
飛仙閣

土門山行窄，
微徑緣秋毫。
棧雲闌千峻，
梯石結構牢。
萬壑敧疏林，
積陰帶奔濤。
寒日外澹泊，
長風中怒號。
歇鞍在地底，
始覺所歷高。
往來雜坐臥，
人馬同被勞。
浮生有定分，
飢飽豈可逃。
歎息謂妻子，
我何隨汝曹。
9.5

The Plankway of the Flying Immortals

At the earthen gate our mountain passage narrows,  
a thin path follows a hair in autumn.¹  
Walkways in clouds, their railings precarious,  
steps of stone, the construction stable.  
In ten thousand ravines sparse forests lean at an angle,  
high-piled shadow lining rushing waves.  
The winter sun lies pale beyond,  
while continuous winds howl in rage within.  
I rest my saddle at a low spot below  
only then realize the height I passed over.  
Of those making the passage, some sit and some lie,  
men and horses alike feel the strain.  
This life adrift has its certain fate,  
how can one flee hunger?  
I heave a sigh and say to wife and children:  
how could I have brought you along?

---

¹ Proverbial for its fineness.
五盤

五盤雖云險，
山色佳有餘。
仰凌棧道細，
俯映江木疏。
地僻無網罟，
水清反多魚。
好鳥不妄飛，
野人半巢居。
喜見淳樸俗，
坦然心神舒。
東郊尚格鬥，
巨猾何時除。
故鄉有弟妹，
流落隨丘墟。
成都萬事好，
豈若歸吾廬。
9.6

Five Turns

Although they say Five Turns is perilous,  
the mountain’s appearance has ample beauties.  
We look up as we fare over the narrow plankway,  
looking down, we see partially through sparse river trees.  
The place is remote, no snares or nets,  
but in the clear waters are many fish.  
Good birds do not fly rashly,  
the local rustics half live in nests.  
I am happy to see such pure and simple ways,  
and, relaxing, the mind and spirit calm.  
There is still combat in the eastern suburbs,  
when will we eliminate that great monster?¹  
At home I had brothers and sisters,  
they are dispersed, so the place is abandoned.  
Everything may be fine in Chengdu,  
but how can it compare to going back to my own cottage?

¹ Shi Siming.
龍門閣

清江下龍門，
絕壁無尺土。
長風駕高浪，
浩浩自太古。
危途中縈盤，
仰望垂線縷。
滑石欹誰鑿，
浮梁裊相拄。
目眩隕雜花，
頭風吹過雨。
百年不敢料，
一墜那得取。
飽聞經瞿塘，
足見度大庾。
終身歷艱險，
恐懼從此數。
9.7

The Plankway of Dragongate Mountain

The clear river goes down through Dragongate, on the sheer cliff is not a foot of dirt. A steady wind drives high waves in vast floods from primeval times. A perilous path winds around mid-slope, looking up, a slender thread hanging. Who bored the holes in this slippery stone aslant that support the pontoon bridge dangling? The eyes are dazzled with various flowers falling, my head aches from rain blowing past. One dare not assume life’s full hundred years— if you fall, how could you be retrieved? I have heard my fill of passing through Qutang Gorge, and can well enough see crossing Great Yu Ridge.¹ All my life I have gone through dangers, but for sheer terror the count begins here.

¹ Both are famed for their perils.
9.8

石櫃閣

季冬日已長，
山晚半天赤。
蜀道多早花，
江間饒奇石。

石櫃曾波上，
臨虛蕩高壁。
清暉回群鷗，
暝色帶遠客。

羈棲負幽意，
感歎向絕跡。
信甘孱懦嬰，
不獨凍餒迫。

優遊謝康樂，
放浪陶彭澤。
吾衰未自由，
謝爾性有適。
The Plankway on Stonebox Mountain

Winter’s last month, days grow longer already, it is late in the mountains, half the sky red. Flowers often come early on Shu’s roads, in the rivers are many remarkable rocks. Stonebox lies over the layers of waves, we look out on the void that sweeps the high cliff. In the clear glow flocks of gulls turn back, as the color of darkness engulfs far travelers. Lodging abroad goes against my desire for seclusion, I face this trackless waste stirred to sighs. I truly accept being encumbered by timidity and weakness, I am not merely compelled by freezing and hunger. At perfect ease was Xie Kangle, wild and unrestrained, Tao of Pengze. In declining years I have not yet done as I pleased, I yield to you in finding something that suits one’s nature.

---

1 The poet Xie Lingyun.
2 *Tao Qian.
3 That is, he yields to Tao Qian and Xie Lingyun.
桔柏渡

青冥寒江渡，
駕竹為長橋。
竿濕煙漠漠，
江永風蕭蕭。
連笮動嫋娜，
征衣颯颯颯。
急流鴇鷁散，
絕岸龜鼈騃。
西轅自茲異，
東逝不可要。
高通荊門路，
闊會滄海潮。
孤光隱顧眄，
遊子悵寂寥。
無以洗心胸，
前登但山椒。
In the dark blue sky at this cold river crossing, they framed bamboo into a long bridge. Its poles are wet in the billowing mist, the river goes on always, the wind whistling. Linked sections of bamboo stir swaying, our traveling clothes flap and flutter. Geese and loons scatter in the swift current, turtles and lizards are confident on the sheer banks. My westward carriage diverges from this point on, I cannot invite the eastward flow to go along.¹ High, it will pass through on a route to Jingmen, then, widening, it will meet the gray sea’s tides. Its solitary light dims in my backward stare, the traveler grows depressed at his isolation. I have no means to wash clear the heart in my breast, the climb ahead is just mountaintops.

¹ From this point the route turns west toward Chengdu.
9.10

劍門

惟天有設險，
劍門天下壯。
連山抱西南，
石角皆北向。
兩崖崇墉倚，
刻画城郭狀。
一夫怒臨關，
百萬未可傍。
珠玉走中原，
岷峨氣悽愴。
三皇五帝前，
雞犬各相放。
後王尚柔遠，
職貢道已喪。
至今英雄人，
高視見霸王。
併吞與割據，
極力不相讓。
吾將罪真宰，
意欲鏟疊嶂。
9.10

Swordgate

Only Heaven could set down such fastness, Swordgate, under Heaven the grandest.
Linked mountains embrace the southwest, sharp angles of stone all face north.
Paired slopes, lofty bulwarks leaning, cut and rived to the form of city walls.
With one fellow in fury holding this pass, a million men could not get near him.
Pearls and jade speed to the Central Plain, the vapors of Mounts Min and Emei are gloomy.
Before, the Three Emperors and the Five Sovereigns each let their chickens and dogs forage separately.
Later kings honored gentle policy for far places, with tribute duties the Way has been ruined.
Even to this day heroic men gaze haughtily, looking to rule by force.
They swallow neighbors and hack off territory, use the utmost strength and do not yield.
I will put the blame on the One In Charge I wish he would pare down these layers of screening cliffs.

---

1. In high antiquity.
2. The “way” here refers either to tribute responsibilities or to “gentle policy for far places.”
3. That is, Heaven.
恐此復偶然，
臨風默惆悵。

9.11

鹿頭山

鹿頭何亭亭，
是日慰饑渴。
連山西南斷，
俯見千里豁。
遊子出京華，
劍門不可越。
及茲險阻盡，
始喜原野闊。
殊方昔三分，
霸氣曾間發。
天下今一家，
雲端失雙闕。
悠然想揚馬，
繼起名硉兀。
有文令人傷，
何處埋爾骨。
紆餘脂膏地，
慘澹豪俠窟。
Yet perhaps this happens just by chance,\textsuperscript{1}
facing the wind I am depressed in silence.

\textit{Swordgate Pass, fortified between two sheer cliffs, was the gateway to Shu.}

\textbf{9.11}

Deerhead Mountain

How high looms Deerhead!—
this day it consoles my hunger and thirst.
Linked mountains break off to the southwest,
looking down I see a thousand leagues spread open.

When I left the capital as a wanderer,
\textit{Swordgate seemed uncrossable.}

But at this point the blocking fastness ends,
and now I rejoice at the wild plains spreading broad.

A different land, once one of the three divisions,\textsuperscript{2}
an overlord’s aura once appeared here.\textsuperscript{3}

All the world is now one family,

though the edge of clouds hides the paired palace gates.

Far off I envisage Yang Xiong and Sima Xiangru,\textsuperscript{4}
appearing in succession, their fame rising high.

They had literary works, but it makes one pained,
where now are your bones buried?

Winding freely, this rich fertile place,
but a brooding lair for tough men-at-arms.

\textsuperscript{1} Probably referring to the local rebellions described earlier.
\textsuperscript{2} The Shu-Han Kingdom was one of the Three Kingdoms early in the third century.
\textsuperscript{3} Liu Bei, who founded the Shu-Han Kingdom.
\textsuperscript{4} Famous Western Han writers from Chengdu.
仗鉞非老臣，
宣風豈專達。
冀公柱石姿，
論道邦國活。
斯人亦何幸，
公鎮逾歲月。

9.12

成都府

翳翳桑榆日，
照我征衣裳。
我行山川異，
忽在天一方。  
但逢新人民，
未卜見故鄉。
大江東流去，
遊子去日長。
曾城填華屋，
季冬樹木蒼。
喧然名都會，
吹簫間笙簧。
信美無與適，
側身望川梁。
If the axe-holder were not an old servant of the throne,\(^1\) how could cultural influence be conveyed? The Duke of Ji has the manner of a cornerstone of state,\(^2\) under his governance this domain thrives. How fortunate are these people here, may his command last through months and years!

9.12

Chengdu District

Shadowed, the sun in mulberry and elm\(^3\) shines on my traveling clothes. In my journey the mountains and rivers have changed, and suddenly I am at an edge of the world. I meet only new people, I cannot foretell seeing my homeland again. The great river flows off to the east, the days since the wanderer left have grown long. These tiered walls are filled with splendid houses, in winter’s last month the trees are gray-green. Full of noise, this famous metropolis, pipes playing mix with reed organs. Though lovely indeed, I have no one to turn to, I lean gazing at the river bridge.

---

1  Holding the axe is the authority of a commander.
2  Pei Mian was the current military commissioner of the region and the metropolitan governor of Chengdu.
3  The late afternoon sun.
鳥雀夜各歸，
中原杳茫茫。
初月出不高，
眾星尚爭光。
自古有羈旅，
我何苦哀傷。

高適, 贈杜二拾遺

傳道招提客，
詩書自討論。
佛香時入院，
僧飯屢過門。
聽法還應難，
尋經剩欲翻。
草玄今已畢，
此外復何言。

酬高使君相贈

古寺僧牢落，
空房客寓居。
故人供祿米，
鄰舍與園蔬。
Little birds each return at night,
the Central Plain is faint in the far distance.
The new moon comes out not high,
the hosts of stars still compete in light.
People have wandered far from home since ancient days,
why should I be so terribly troubled?

After finally reaching Chengdu early in 760, Du Fu let his old friend Gao Shi, prefect of nearby Pengzhou, know. Apparently Du Fu had taken temporary lodging in a Buddhist Temple. His old friend, the poet Gao Shi, was serving in the region and wrote to him.

Gao Shi, Presented to Reminder Du (2)

They say that the guest in the temple
is disposed to critical discussion of the Classics.
For incense to Buddha he sometimes enters the compound,
for a monk’s meal he often passes the gate.
Hearing the dharma, I’m sure he raises problems,
he seeks sutras to further elaborate.
Now he has finished drafting the Great Mystery,¹
what more does he have to say in addition to this?

9.13

In Response to What Was Sent from His Excellency Gao

In the ancient temple the monks are scattered and few,
I take lodging as a guest in an empty room.
An old friend provides rice from his salary,
a neighbor gives vegetables from his garden.

---
¹ An imitation of the Classic of Changes by the Western Han writer *Yang Xiong, originally from Chengdu. Yang Xiong earlier wrote *fu in imitation of the more famous Sima Xiangru, who was also from Chengdu.
卜居

雙樹容聽法，
三車肯載書。
草玄吾豈敢，
賦或似相如。

9.14

卜居

浣花流水水西頭，
主人為卜林塘幽。
已知出郭少塵事，
更有澄江銷客愁。
無數蜻蜓齊上下，
一雙鸂鶒對沈浮。
東行萬里堪乘興，
須向山陰上小舟。

9.15

王十五司馬弟出郭相訪，兼遺營茅屋費
客裏何遷次，
江邊正寂寥。
Paired sala trees make a place for hearing dharma,¹ are the “three vehicles” willing to carry books?² How would I dare try to draft the *Great Mystery?*³

but my *fu* may be like those of Sima Xiangru.

*Despite his initial complaint that Chengdu was not his home, Du Fu settled in very well, and his poems begin to have a contentment that was new to his work. In the western outskirts of the city he soon chose the site for his “thatched hut,” which in later years—often rebuilt—became one of the most famous sites of Chengdu.*

9.14

Siting a Dwelling

Flowing waters of Flower-washing Creek, by the waters’ western edge, the householder chose this spot for a dwelling in the seclusion of wooded pools.

I knew already mundane matters are few outside the outer walls,

the clear River is here as well to melt a sojourner’s woes.

Dragonflies beyond counting go up and down in unison,

a single pair of mandarin ducks face each other bobbing.

One might follow a whim, going east thousands of leagues,

then you must head toward Shanyin and get in a tiny boat.³

9.15

My Cousin Assistant Wang (15) Came out of Town to Visit Me and Gave Me Some Funds For Building My Thatched Cottage

How can one move to new lodgings as a wayfarer?—

I was just then feeling all alone by the river.

---

¹ The Buddha preached underneath a pair of sala trees.
² In the parable of the burning house in the *Lotus Sutra*, there are three vehicles outside the gates to carry people to safety: an ox-cart, a sheep-cart, and a deer-cart. These are figures for the different levels of Buddhist teaching.
³ *Wang Huizhi.
蕭八明府實處覓桃栽

肯來尋一老，
愁破是今朝。 喜我營茅棟，
攜錢過野橋。他鄉唯表弟，
還往莫辭遙。

9.16

蕭八明府實處覓桃栽

奉乞桃栽一百根，
春前為送浣花村。 河陽縣裏雖無數，
濯錦江邊未滿園。

9.17

從韋二明府續處覓綿竹

華軒藹藹他年到，
綿竹亭亭出縣高。 江上舍前無此物，
幸分蒼翠拂波濤。
But you were willing to come to visit an old man,
sadness was broken this very morning.
You worried how I would manage for roof-beams and thatch,
you brought cash, crossing our bridge in the wilds.
In this strange land I have only my cousin,
don’t refuse to keep coming because of the distance.

The group of quatrains that follows has no precedent—using poetry to set up house. Du Fu writes to a number of officials in the region asking for trees for his new property and dishes.

9.16

Asking for Peach Saplings from County Magistrate Xiao Shi (8)

With respect I beg from you peach saplings, a hundred of them, before spring send them to me at Flower-Washing Village. Although they exist beyond number in Heyang County,¹ beside Brocade Rinsing River here they do not fill my garden.

9.17

Asking for “Cotton Bamboo” from County Magistrate Wei Xu (2)

Your splendid porch is shadowed by their profusion, I will come there someday, the cotton bamboo rise up tall, high over the county seat. Before my cottage by the river I don’t have any of these, be so good as to share their azure green to brush my waves.

---

¹ When Magistrate of Heyang, the Jin poet Pan Yue planted peach trees all over the county.
9.18

憑何十一少府邕覓榿木栽

草堂塹西無樹林，
非子誰復見幽心。
飽聞榿木三年大，
與致溪邊十畝陰。

9.19

憑韋少府班覓松樹子栽

落落出群非榿柳，
青青不朽豈楊梅。
欲存老蓋千年意，
為覓霜根數寸栽。

9.20

又於韋處乞大邑瓷碗

大邑燒瓷輕且堅，
扣如哀玉錦城傳。
君家白碗勝霜雪，
急送茅齋也可憐。
9.18

Asking for Alder Tree Saplings from Sheriff He Yong (11)

West of the ditch by my thatched hut there is no grove of trees, other than you who else understands my reclusive heart? I’ve often heard that alder trees grow big in three years, send to me for my creekside ten acres of shade.

9.19

Asking Sheriff Wei Ban for Pine Seeds to Plant

Spreading wide, standing out from the crowd, it’s not the beech tree, evergreen and not wasting away, how could it be the tree strawberry? To give the mood of a thousand years in an old canopy, get me several inches of frosty roots to plant.

9.20

Also Asking Wei for Ceramic Cups from Dayi

The ceramics fired at Dayi are light as well as hard, knocked, they are like mournful jade, so they say in Brocade City. The white cups of your household are whiter than frost and snow, send some quickly to my thatched study, for they are worth cherishing.

1 Chengdu.
9.21

詣徐卿覓果栽

草堂少花今欲栽，
不問緑李與黃梅。
石筍街中卻歸去，
果園坊裏為求來。

9.22

堂成

背郭堂成蔭白茅，
緣江路熟俯青郊。
榿林礙日吟風葉，
籠竹和煙滴露梢。
暫止飛鳥將數子，
頻來語燕定新巢。
旁人錯比揚雄宅，
憶自己心作解嘲。
9.21

Going to Sir Xu to Ask for Fruit Trees

My thatched cottage is short on flowers and now I want to plant some, I don’t care if it’s the green plum or the yellow prunus. On the Street of Stone Columns going back home, in the Fruit Grove Quarter I went on purpose to find some.

9.22

My Cottage is Finished

Away from the outer wall my cottage is finished, white rushes give it cover, the road along the river is familiar and looks out on green meadows. A grove of alders blocks the sun, leaves humming in the wind, basket bamboo blends with the mist, their branches drip with dew. It stops the flying birds awhile, leading their several young, and often brings chattering swallows to settle their new nests. Bystanders err in comparing it to Yang Xiong’s cottage—I’ve grown lazy and have no mind to write a “Defense Against Ridicule.”¹

¹ When Yang Xiong was drafting the *Supreme Mystery*, someone criticized him for preferring the private life to one of state service. In response Yang wrote his “Defense Against Ridicule.”
蜀相

丞相祠堂何处寻，
锦官城外柏森森。
映阶碧草自春色，
隔叶黄鹂空好音。
三顾频烦天下计，
两朝开济老臣心。
出师未捷身先死，
长使英雄泪满襟。

梅雨

南京犀浦道，
四月熟黄梅。
湛湛长江去，
冥冥细雨来。
茅茨疏易湿，
云雾密难开。
竟日蛟龙喜，
盘涡与岸迥。
9.23

Shu’s Minister¹

The shrine hall to the Minister, where can it be found?— outside the walls of Brocade City, where the cypress tree stands dense.²
Half hiding the stairs, sapphire grasses take on the colors of spring,
yellow orioles beyond the leaves give fine notes for naught.
Thrice called on, urged repeatedly: his plans for all the world.
for two reigns, founding and sustaining: an old officer’s heart.
Ere “the army sent forth” was victorious, the man himself died,
it always makes bold-spirited men fill their clothes with tears.

9.24

“Plum Rain”³

On the Xipu road from the Southern Capital⁴
the fourth month ripens the yellow punus.
The long river goes off surging,
and, darkening, a fine rain comes.
Roof-thatch, loosely bound, is easily soaked,
clouds and fog are dense and will not lift.
All day long the dragons delight,
whirlpools turning with the bank.

¹ This poem, usually dated to 760 soon after Du Fu arrived in Chengdu, was written on the shrine to *Zhuge Liang, who assisted the founder of the Shu-Han kingdom, Liu Bei. Liu Bei called on Zhuge Liang three times (l.5) before Zhuge Liang agreed to serve him. Eventually Zhuge Liang became his minister in 221. After the death of Liu Bei, Zhuge Liang served his successor, the two reigns referred to in line 6. The most famous of Zhuge Liang’s writings was his “Memorial on Sending the Army Forth.” Finally, on a campaign against the Wei in 234, Zhuge Liang died; and soon afterward the Shu-Han fell to the Wei.
² This was the famous cypress tree of Zhuge Liang’s shrine of which Du Fu wrote in “Ballad of the Old Cypress” (15.70), and elsewhere. This was supposedly planted by Zhuge Liang’s own hand.
³ “Plum rain” was a term for rain in the fourth and fifth lunar month.
⁴ Xipu was a county adjacent to Chengdu.
9.25

為農

錦里煙塵外，
江村八九家。
圓荷浮小葉，
細麥落輕花。
卜宅從兹老，
為農去國賒。
遠慚勾漏令，
不得問丹砂。

9.26

有客

患氣經時久，
臨江卜宅新。
喧卑方避俗，
疏快頗宜人。
有客過茅宇，
呼兒正葛巾。
自鋤稀菜甲，
小摘為情親。
9.25

Being a Farmer

Past the smoke and dust of Brocade Town¹
is a river village of eight or nine homes.
Round lotus let their tiny leaves float,
the thin wheat sheds its light flowers.
I site my dwelling, to grow old from this moment on,
being a farmer, far from the capital.
Goulou's magistrate of long ago puts me to shame—
I did not get to find out about cinnabar grains.²

9.26

I Have a Guest

I have long had problems with breathing,
recently I sited a house overlooking the river.
Getting away from the noisy baseness of the crowd,
the casualness and briskness here quite suits me.
A guest stops by my thatch cottage,
I call to my boy to straighten my homespun turban.
I hoe for myself and have few vegetable sprouts,
but I'll pick a bit for friendship's sake.

¹ Chengdu.
² The magistrate of Goulou County was the Jin alchemist Ge Hong. Cinnabar grains were used in preparing elixirs of immortality.
9.27

賓至

幽棲地僻經過少，
老病人扶再拜難。
豈有文章驚海內，
漫勞車馬駐江干。

竟日淹留佳客坐，
百年粗粝腐儒餐。
不嫌野外無供給，
乘興還來看藥欄。

9.28

狂夫

萬里橋西一草堂，
百花潭水即滄浪。
風含翠筍娟娟淨，
雨裛紅蕖冉冉香。

厚祿故人書斷絕，
恆飢稚子色淒涼。
欲填溝壑惟疏放，
自笑狂夫老更狂。
9.27

A Guest Comes

The spot where I lodge in seclusion is remote, those who come by are few, old and sick, supported by someone, it's hard to make my bows. The pieces I have written hardly amaze the entire world; you've gone out of your way for nothing to stop your coach by the river's edge. Lingering the whole day through, the worthy guest sits; a lifetime of coarse grains and bran is a hack Confucian's meal. If you don't hate that here in the wilds there is nothing to provide for you, come back when the whim takes you and see my herb trellis.

9.28

Crazy Man

West of Ten Thousand League Bridge, a single thatched cottage, the waters of Hundred Flowers Pool are my Canglang. Wind in the azure dwarf bamboo, winsomely pure, rain soaks the river lotus, more fragrant with passing time. From old friends with fat salaries letters have ceased coming, my children, constantly hungry, have forlorn complexions. Knowing I'll be tossed in some ditch when I die, I grow only more careless and free, and laugh at myself as a crazy man who gets crazier in old age.

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1 Canglang the proverbial place of reclusion, where one could either emerge to serve or stay withdrawn, according to the situation of the times.
9.29

田舍

田舍清江曲，
柴門古道旁。
草深迷市井，
地僻懒衣裳。

櫸柳枝枝弱，
枇杷樹樹香。
鸕鶿西日照，
曬翅滿魚梁。

9.30

江村

清江一曲抱村流，
長夏江村事事幽。
自去自來堂上燕，
相亲相近水中鷗。

老妻畫紙為棋局，
稚子敲針作釣鉤。
但有故人供祿米，
微躯此外更何求。
9.29

Farmhouse

A farmhouse at the clear river’s bend,
a ramshackle gate by an ancient road.
The plants are so thick I lose sight of the market,
a spot out of the way, I am careless about my dress.
Beech trees, every branch pliant;
loquats, every tree fragrant.
Cormorants, lit by the sun in the west,
dry their wings, filling the fish weir.

9.30

River Village

A bend of the clear river flows on, embracing the village,
through long summer in this river village all that happens is secluded.
They come and go of their own free will, swallows in the hall;
friendly and drawing closer to me, gulls in the water.¹
My wife marks lines on paper to serve as a chess board;
my young son hammers a needle to make a fishing hook.
If only I had an old friend to provide rice from his salary,
what more beyond that would I seek for myself?

¹ *Gulls.*
9.31

江漲

江漲柴門外，
兒童報急流。
下床高數尺，
倚杖沒中洲。
細動迎風燕，
輕搖逐浪鷗。
漁人縈小楫，
容易拔舟頭。

9.32

野老

野老籬前江岸迥，
柴門不正逐江開。
漁人網集澄潭下，
估客船隨返照來。
長路關心悲劍閣，
片雲何意傍琴臺。
王師未報收東郡，
城闕秋生畫角哀。
9.31

The River Floods

The river floods outside my ramshackle gate, my boy tells me how swift the current is. While I get out of bed, it rises several feet, as I lean on my staff, it swallows isles midstream. Faintly moving, swallows meeting the wind; lightly tossing, gulls running with the waves. The fisherman spins his tiny paddle— with ease he turns the boat’s prow.

9.32

Old Rustic

Before this old rustic’s hedge the river’s shore turns, my ramshackle gate is not at right angles, but opens along with the river. Fishermen’s nets are gathered in from under the clear pool, a trader’s boat comes following last sunlight shining back. The long journey is on my mind, grieving at Sword-Tower Mountain, for what purpose does this wisp of cloud stay beside Zither Terrace? The king’s army has not yet announced the eastern provinces’ capture, at the palace’s paired turrets autumn brings painted horns’ lament.

1 Passed on Du Fu’s journey to Chengdu.
2 A site in Chengdu associated with the Han writer *Sima Xiangru.
9.33

雲山

京洛雲山外，
音書靜不來。
神交作賦客，
力盡望鄉臺。
衰疾江邊臥，
親朋日暮回。
白鷗元水宿，
何事有餘哀。

9.34

遣興

干戈猶未定，
弟妹各何之。
拭淚霑襟血，
梳頭滿面絲。
地卑荒野大，
天遠暮江遲。
衰疾那能久，
應無見汝時。
9.33

Cloudy Mountains

Chang’an and Luoyang are beyond cloudy mountains, in the stillness no word or letter comes. In spirit I make friends with the *fu* writers,¹ at the Terrace for Gazing Homeward I wear myself out. Aging and ill, I lie here by the river, kin and friends turn back at dusk. The white gull always spends nights on the water— why then does it make such abundant lament?

9.34

Conveying What Stirred Me

The clash of arms has not yet been put to rest, where have my brothers and sister each gone? I wipe away tears, blood stains my lapels, I comb my hair, white strands fill my face. The land here is low, the wilderness large, the heavens are far, the twilight river slow. Sick and weak, how can I last long?— I’m sure I will never get a chance to see you.

¹ The Western Han writers *Sima Xiangru and *Yang Xiong, both from Chengdu.
9.35

遣愁

養拙蓬為戶，
茫茫何所開。
江通神女館，
地隔望鄉臺。
漸惜容顏老，
無由弟妹來。
兵戈與人事，
回首一悲哀。

9.36

[See notes]

9.37

題壁上韋偃畫馬歌

韋侯別我有所適，
知我憐君畫無敵。
戲拈禿筆掃驊騮，
歎見騏驎出東壁。
一匹齕草一匹嘶，
坐看千里當霜蹄。
9.35

Expelling Sadness

I nurture my clumsiness, my door of wicker,
on what vastness does it open?
The river goes through to the goddess’s lodge,¹
this place, cut off from the Terrace for Gazing Homeward.
I come to pity the aging of my appearance,
I have no way to bring brothers and sister.
The clash of arms and affairs of men,
with a turn of the head, are all lamentable.

9.36

[See notes]

9.37

A Song for Wei Yan’s Mural of Horses

Master Wei is leaving me, going off somewhere,
you know that I admire you for painting without rival.
You playfully picked up a worn-out brush and dashed off Hualiu steeds,²
and I suddenly saw unicorns come forth on my eastern wall.
One horse was chomping on grass, one horse was neighing,
then I looked on thousand-league hooves of frost.

---
¹ The goddess of Wu Mountain, down the Yangzi near Kuizhou.
² One of the Zhou King Mu’s famous horses, used generally for fine steeds.
時危安得真致此，
與人同生亦同死。

戲題王宰畫山水圖歌

十日畫一水，
五日畫一石。
能事不受相促迫，
王宰始肯留真跡。
壯哉崑崙方壺圖，
掛君高堂之素壁。

巴陵洞庭日本東，
赤岸水與銀河通。
中有雲氣隨飛龍。
舟人漁子入浦漵，
山木盡亞洪濤風。

尤工遠勢古莫比，
咫尺應須論萬里。
焉得并州快剪刀，
剪取吳松半江水。
The times are troubled and how could one get to truly bring such as these,  
to share its life with the person and with the person to die?

9.38

Playful Song on Wang Zai’s Landscape Painting

Ten days to paint one stream!  
five days to paint one rock!—  
an old hand does not accept the least pressure to hurry,  
and only then will Wang Zai leave the genuine marks of his art.  
Grand, indeed, this picture of Kunlun to Fanghu,1  
hung on the white wall of your high hall.

From Baling and Lake Dongting to east of Japan  
Red Bank’s waters pass through to the silvery River of Stars,2  
wherein cloudy vapors pursue the dragon in flight.3  
Boatmen and fisherfolk are coming into shore  
as mountain trees are all pressed low by billow-raising winds.

Supreme skill in far vistas, no ancient can compare,  
a mere foot must be reckoned as ten thousand leagues.  
If only I could get myself sharp shears of Bingzhou steel,4  
I’d cut for myself half the waters of the Wusong River.

1 The Kunlun Range is in the farthest west, while Fanghu was one of the isles of the immortals in the Eastern Ocean. Thus the painting seems to cover all the known world. Landscape painting was closely related to cartography.
2 This is a vista, indistinguishable from cartography, of the Yangzi River at least from its middle reaches all the way out to the ocean.
3 Presaging a rainstorm.
4 Bingzhou, in northeast China, was famous for its fine steel.
戲為雙松圖歌

天下幾人畫古松，
畢宏已老韋偃少。
絕筆長風起纖末，
滿堂動色嗟神妙。

兩株慘裂苔蘚皮，
屈鐵交錯回高枝。白摧朽骨龍虎死，
黑入太陰雷雨垂。

松根胡僧憩寂寞，
龐眉皓首無住著。偏袒右肩露雙腳，
葉裏松子僧前落。

韋侯韋侯數相見，
我有一匹好東絹，重之不減錦繡段。
已令拂拭光凌亂，
請君放筆為直幹。
9.39

A Playful Song on a Painting of Paired Pines

How many people in all the world paint ancient pines?—
Bi Hong is already old, and Wei Yan, young.¹
As the brush stops, a steady wind rises in fine branchtips,
throughout the hall expressions change, we admire divine finesse.

On both trunks the mossy bark is sadly rent,
bent iron, their high branches turn crisscrossing.
The white are bleached bones broken of dragon- and tiger-death,
the black enters Great Yin, where thundering rain hangs down.

At the pines’ roots a Hu monk reposes in stillness,
bushy brows, hoary head, no attachments of the passions.²
His right shoulder is left bare, both his feet exposed,
from among the needles a pinecone has fallen in front of him.

Master Wei, Master Wei, I have met you several times—
I possess one bolt of good Eastern silk,
and I value it no less than a piece of embroidery or brocade.
I have had it cleaned until its light is dazzling,
I pray you, let your brush go free and make a trunk that is straight.

¹ Bi Hong was a master painter of pines who flourished in the Tianbao Reign.
² Zhuzhuo 住著, “attachment [of the passions]” is a Buddhist technical term.
9.40

北鄰

明府豈辭滿，
藏身方告勞。
青錢買野竹，
白幃岸江皋。
愛酒晉山簡，
能詩何水曹。
時來訪老疾，
步屨到蓬蒿。

9.41

南鄰

錦里先生烏角巾，
園收芋栗不全貧。
慣看賓客兒童喜，
得食階除鳥雀馴。
秋水纔深四五尺，
野航恰受兩三人。
白沙翠竹江村暮，
相送柴門月色新。
9.40

My Northern Neighbor

The magistrate did not wait until his term expired, he hid his person, then reported he was overworked. With green coins he bought wild bamboo, his white headband set high on the river’s floodplain. In his passion for ale, a Shan Jian of Jin,¹ in his skill at poems, a He of the Waterways Section.² At times he visits this sick old man, strolling over to my weed-grown abode.

9.41

My Southern Neighbor

The Gentleman of the Brocade Wards wears a black turban with corners, gathering taro and chestnuts from his garden he is not entirely poor. Used to watching over guests, his boy is delighted, receiving food upon his stairs, the little birds grow tame. The autumn waters have just now grown deeper by four or five feet, his rustic boat will just take two or three people. White sands and azure bamboo, the river village in twilight, he accompanies me to my ramshackle gate when the moonlight is new.

---

¹ *Shan Jian.
² The early sixth-century poet He Xun.
9.42

過南鄰朱山人水亭

相近竹參差，
相遇人不知。
幽花欹滿樹，
小水細通池。
歸客村非遠，
殘樽席更移。
看君多道氣，
從此數追隨。

9.43

因崔五侍御寄高彭州(適)

百年已過半，
秋至轉飢寒。
為問彭州牧，
何時救急難。
9.42

Dropping By the River Pavilion of My Southern Neighbor, the Mountain Man Zhu

As I drew near, the bamboo was of various heights, you did not know I would be dropping by. Hidden flowers filled the trees bending, a small stream made its thin way to the pool. The village is not far for the guest to go home, for the last cups, we move the party elsewhere. I see that the temper of the Way is strong in you— from now on I will seek your company often.

9.43

Through Vice-Censor Cui (5) I Send This to Gao Shi of Pengzhou

I’ve already passed through half life’s years, autumn comes, I grow ever more hungry and cold. Let me ask Pengzhou’s governor, when are you going to rescue me from hardship?
9.44

奉簡高三十五使君

當代論才子，
如公復幾人。
驊騮開道路，
鷹隼出風塵。
行色秋將晚，
交情老更親。
天涯喜相見，
披豁道吾真。

9.45

和裴迪登新津寺寄王侍郎

何限倚山木，
吟詩秋葉黃。
蟬聲集古寺，
鳥影度寒塘。
風物悲遊子，
登臨憶侍郎。
老夫貪佛日，
隨意宿僧房。
A Note to Prefect Gao (35)

9.44

If we consider talents in the present age,
how many men can compare to you?
The Hualiu steed opens the road,
the falcon rises above windblown dust.
The scene on my travels, autumn getting late,
friendships get closer with old age.
I am delighted to meet you at the ends of the earth,
I open my heart and speak what I truly feel.

9.45

A Companion Piece to Pei Di’s “Climbing Xinjin Temple, Sent to Vice-Director Wang”

What limit to leaning against mountain trees,
chanting poems as the autumn leaves turn yellow?
The voices of cicadas gather in the ancient temple,
reflections of birds cross the cold pool.
The things in the scene make the traveler melancholy,
climbing and looking out, you think back on the Vice-Director.
An old fellow, craving the Buddha’s sunlight,
you follow your mood, spending the night in a monk’s cell.

Xinjin was in Shuzhou, not far southwest of Chengdu. Pei Di was one of Wang Wei’s closest friends, and “Vice-Director Wang” was Wang Jin, Wang Wei’s brother.
贈蜀僧閭丘師兄

大師銅梁秀，
籍籍名家孫。
嗚呼先博士，
炳靈精氣奔。
惟昔武皇后，
臨軒御乾坤。
多士盡儒冠，
墨客藐云屯。
當時上紫殿，
不獨卿相尊。
世傳閭丘筆，
峻極逾崑崙。
鳳藏丹霄暮，
龍去白水渾。
青熒雪嶺東，
碑碣舊制存。
斯文散都邑，
高價越璣璠。
晚看作者意，
妙絕與誰論。
9.46

To the Shu Monk, His Reverence Lüqiu

His Reverence is the flower of Mount Tongliang, on every tongue, grandson of a famous house.¹
Alas, the former Erudite, his spirit, aglow with divine light, has fled.
In the past Empress Wu looked out from her dais, steered Heaven and Earth. Many officers, all in scholar’s hats,
men of the brush, teeming like massed clouds. Back then those who entered the Purple Palace were not only those exalted as ministers or grandees. They said that Lüqiu’s brush surpassed the Kunlun Mountains in loftiness. The phoenix hid, cinnabar auroras darkened, the dragon departed, white waters turned turbid.² A blue glow east of snow peaks, where his former work survives on a stele. His cultural writings are scattered among cities, their high worth surpassing the rarest jade. We see the writer’s intent late in his life, with whom can I discuss its utter fineness?

¹ Lüqiu Yun, Erudite of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices in the reign of Empress Wu. 
² Referring to the death of Lüqiu Yun.
吾祖詩冠古，
同年蒙主恩。
豫章夾日月，
歲久空深根。
小子思疏闊，
豈能達詞門。
窮愁一揮淚，
相遇即諸昆。
我住錦官城，
兄居祇樹園。
地近慰旅愁，
往來當丘樊。
天涯歇滯雨，
粳稻臥不翻。
漂然薄遊倦，
始與道侶敦。
景晏步修廊，
而無車馬喧。
夜闌接軟語，
落月如金盆。
漠漠世界黑，
驅驅爭奪繁。
惟有摩尼珠，
可照濁水源。
My grandfather’s poems crowned the past,
he enjoyed the ruler’s grace in those same years.
A camphor tree, sun and moon on either side,\(^1\)
after long years has put down deep roots for nothing.\(^2\)
My own thoughts are impractical,
how could I succeed at the gate of letters?
In deepest sorrow I wipe away my tears,
meeting, we are brothers at once.
I live in Brocade Administration City,
you, my brother, reside in Jetavana Park.\(^3\)
The places are close by, consoling the traveler’s sorrow,
our comings and goings are in a recluse’s hill and garden.
At the end of the earth the lingering rains cease,
the rice lies flat and doesn’t wave in the breeze.
Tired of meaningless travels, tossed along,
now first I form sincere ties with my companion in the Way.
Daylight wanes as we walk the long corridors,
“yet there is no noise of horse or carriage.”\(^4\)
At night’s end I receive your gentle words,
with the setting moon like a plate of gold.
Spreading far and wide, this world is black,
rushing headlong, competition to grasp is everywhere.
There is only the Mani pearl\(^5\)
that can light muddied water to its source.\(^6\)

---

1 ‘The camphor tree was proverbial for its fine timber (talent); sun and moon on either side is a figure for its height.
2 That is, Du Fu does not continue his grandfather’s success.
3 The park built for the Buddha, here referring to a monastery.
4 A famous line of *Tao Qian.
5 Buddhist doctrine.
6 i.e. purify someone in this impure world.
泛溪
落景下高堂，
进舟泛迴溪。
誰謂築居小，
未盡喬木西。
遠郊信荒僻，
秋色有餘淒。
練練峰上雪，
纖纖雲表霓。
童戇左右岸，
罟戈畢提攜。
翻倒荷芰亂，
指揮徑路迷。
得魚已割鱗，
采藕不洗泥。
人情逐鮮美，
物賤事已睽。
吾村靄暝姿，
異舍雞亦棲。
蕭條欲何適，
出處庶可齊。
9.47

Boating on the Creek

When the sunlight sinks down past the high hall,
I bring out my boat to sail on the winding creek.
Who claims that the dwelling I built is small?—
even west of the tall trees it hasn’t disappeared.
The far outlands of the city are truly a wilderness,
in autumn colors there is ample chill.
Silk-white is the snow on the mountain peaks,
and slender, the rainbows beyond the clouds.
Children play on the banks, both right and left,
all are carrying nets and darts.
They overturn lotus and water-caltrops in confusion
their directions make me lose my way.
No sooner do they catch a fish than they scale it,
and they pick lotus roots without washing off the mud.
People love to pursue what is fine and fresh,
but that principle is violated with these common things.
My village shows its charms in the darkening haze,
in other cottages even the chickens are roosting.
Where will I go in this desolate scene?—
I have almost grown indifferent to going forth or staying put.¹

¹ “Going forth or staying put” may have a mundane sense, but it can also mean “serving or living in retirement.”
衣上見新月，
霜中登故畦。
濁醪自初熟，
東城多鼓鼙。

9.48

出郭
霜露晚淒淒，
高天逐望低。
遠煙鹽井上，
斜景雪峰西。
故國猶兵馬，
他鄉亦鼓鼙。
江城今夜客，
還與舊鳥啼。

9.49

恨別
洛城一別四千里，
胡騎長驅五六年。
草木變衰行劍外，
兵戈阻絕老江邊。
On my clothes I see the new moonlight,
in the frost I go into the old garden plot.
The thick brew is now first ready,
many sounds of watch-drums from the city to the east.

9.48

Leaving the Town

Frost and dew grow chilly late in the day,
the high skies get lower the farther I gaze.
Distant smoke is rising over the salt-wells,
sinking daylight from west of snow-capped peaks.
In my homeland there are still troops and horses,
in this strange land too, war-drums.
A sojourner in the river city tonight
goes back, crying out with the same old crows.

9.49

Regretting Parting

Once we parted in Luoyang I was four thousand leagues away,
Hu horsemen keep on galloping for five or six years.
Plants and trees withered away as I went beyond Swordgate;
now blocked and cut off by clash of arms I grow old beside the River.
思家步月清宵立，
憶弟看雲白日眠。
聞道河陽近乘勝，
司徒急為破幽燕。

9.50–51

散愁二首

I

久客宜旋旆，
興王未息戈。
蜀星陰見少，
江雨夜聞多。
百萬傳深入，
寰區望匪它。
司徒下燕趙，
收取舊山河。

II

聞道並州鎮，
尚書訓士齊。
幾時通薊北，
當日報關西。
Longing for home, I pace in moonlight and stand in the clear night,
recalling my brothers, I watch the clouds and doze off in broad
daylight.
I’ve heard that at Heyang there was recently a victory—
8 may the Minister act quickly and smash You and Yan for me!¹

9.50–51

Dispersing Melancholy

I
Our banners, so long away, should now turn homeward.
but the king of the Restoration has not laid arms to rest.
Shu’s stars are seen rarely in cloudy skies,
4 river rain at night is heard often.
They say a million have broken deep into enemy lines,
the whole world’s hopes are for nothing else.
The Minister of Education will bring down Yan and Zhao,²
and take back our former mountains and rivers.

II
I’ve heard that in the Bingzhou command,
the minister drills troops to regular order.³
When shall we get through to Jibei?—⁴
4 on that day send news to the capital region.

¹ The loyalist general Li was acting Minister of Education (situ). You and Yan refer to
Fanyang, the staging area for the rebels.
² This is Li Guangbi, an important Tang general despite his nominal office.
³ Wang Sili, the Minister of War.
⁴ The headquarters of the rebel army.
建都十二韻

建都十二韻

亜生未蘇息，
胡馬半乾坤。
議在雲臺上，
誰扶黃屋尊。
建都分魏闕，
下詔辟荆門。
恐失東人望，
其如西極存。
時危當雪恥，
計大豈輕論。
雖倚三階正，
終愁萬國翻。
牽裾恨不死，
漏網辱殊恩。
Yearning for the palace towers, my loyal heart breaks, hoary-headed, I weep, soaking my clothes. This old soul cannot be called back, I fear I will always miss the road home.

_The military situation did not turn out as Du Fu hoped. Shi Siming counterattacked, and the key northeastern prefectures remained in the hands of autonomous generals._

**9.52**

*Establishing a Capital: Twelve Couplets*

The common folk still have no respite, Hu horses cover half the world. In policy debates upon Cloud Terrace, who aids the exalted Yellow Canopy? Establishing a capital, a branch of the palace towers, an edict came down, calling on Jingmen. They feared disappointing the easterners’ hopes, but what about sowing concern for the far west? The moment perilous, we should wipe away the shame, these plans are important—how can they be considered lightly? Although we rely on the correctness of the Three Lords of State, in the end one may worry the myriad domains will be restless. Tugging the robe-hems, I regret not dying, I escaped penalty by exceptional and undeserved grace.

---

1. This refers to an edict of 760, disestablishing Chengdu as the “Southern Capital” and transferring that designation to Jingzhou.
2. The emperor’s carriage, and hence, the emperor.
4. Chengdu, which had been the Southern Capital.
5. That is, defeat the rebels.
6. Literally the “Three Terraces” constellation, corresponding with the high lords of state.
7. “Tugging the robe-hems.” This refers to Du Fu’s earlier support of Fang Guan in court.
永負漢庭哭，
遙憐湘水魂。
窮冬客江劍，
隨事有田園。
風斷青蒲節，
霜埋翠竹根。
衣冠空穰穰，
關輔久昏昏。
願枉長安日，
光輝照北原。

9.53

村夜

風色蕭蕭暮，
江頭人不行。
村舂雨外急，
鄰火夜深明。
胡羯何多難，
樵漁寄此生。
中原有兄弟，
萬里正含情。
Forever I have failed in weeping in the Han courtyard,¹
from afar I am moved by that soul of the Xiang River.²
At winter’s end, sojourner by the river in Shu,
I have fields and gardens to set as my task.
The wind breaks the joints of green rushes,
frost buries the roots of azure bamboo.
Caps and gowns are teeming in vain—
the capital district has long been darkened.
I wish to turn aside the sun of Chang’an³
that its light may shine on the northern plains.

While Chang’an remained the only real capital (with Luoyang as a notional alternative, the Eastern Capital), the Tang, with its peculiar passion for symmetry, had “capitals” in each of the four directions. Shu had briefly been the “Southern Capital,” but that distinction was shifted to Jingzhou.

9.53

Night in the Village

The look of the wind, whistling in twilight,
no one walks by the river.
Village pounding, urgent beyond the rain,⁴
a neighbor’s fire, bright deep into the night.
Why so many troubles from the Hu and Jie?—
I will lodge this life with fishermen and woodsmen.
On the Central Plain I have brothers,
now holding back feeling for them, thousands of leagues away.

---
¹ As Jia Yi claimed to do presenting his essay on government to Han Wendi.
² Qu Yuan, who drowned himself in the Xiang River region. Du Fu compares his own wanderings to Qu Yuan’s exile.
³ The emperor.
⁴ Hulling grain.
寄楊五桂州譚（因州參軍段子之任）

五嶺皆炎熱，
宜人獨桂林。
梅花萬里外，
雪片一冬深。
聞此寬相憶，
為邦復好音。
江邊送孫楚，
遠附白頭吟。

西郊

時出碧雞坊，
西郊向草堂。
市橋官柳細，
江路野梅香。
傍架齊書帙，
看題檢藥囊。
無人覺來往，
疏懶意何長。
9.54

To Yang Tan (5) of Guizhou (Sent by way of Adjutant Duan, going to his post)

The five Southern Alps are all blazing hot,
only Guilin is suited for people.
Plum blossoms thousands of leagues away,
4 snowflakes deep the whole winter.
Hearing this eases my thoughts of you,
as well good news of your governance of the land.
By the river I see off my Sun Chu,¹
entrusting him with my “Song of White Hair” for one afar.²

9.55

The Western Suburban Fields

Sometimes I go out from Green Chicken Ward
and head to my thatched cottage on the western meadows.
The public willows by Market Bridge have fine branches,
4 the wild plums on the River Road smell sweet.
Going over to my bookcase, I arrange the scroll-wrappers evenly,
I inspect my medicine bag, checking the labels.
No one realizes my comings and goings—
8 this mood of careless laziness lasts so long!

¹ The writer Sun Chu served as adjutant in the Jin. Here it refers to Duan.
² The “Song of White Hair” was attributed to Zhuo Wenjun, to be sent to her husband, the Western Han writer *Sima Xiangru. Here it simply refers to a poem written by someone with white hair, Du Fu.
9.56

和裴迪登蜀州東亭送客逢早梅相憶見寄

東閣官梅動詩興，
還如何遜在揚州。
此時對雪遙相憶，
送客逢春可自由。
幸不折來傷歲暮，
若為看去亂鄉愁。
江邊一樹垂垂發，
朝夕催人自白頭。

9.57

暮登四安寺鐘樓寄裴十迪

暮倚高樓對雪峰，
僧來不語自鳴鐘。
孤城返照紅將斂，
近市浮煙翠且重。
多病獨愁常闇寂，
故人相見未從容。
知君苦思緣詩瘦，
太向交遊萬事慵。
9.56

A Companion Piece to a Poem Sent Me by Pei Di, “Climbing to the East Pavilion of Shuzhou to Send Off a Traveler, Coming Upon Early Plum Blossoms and Thinking of You”

The public plums by the eastern kiosk stirred poetry’s inspiration, and it was just as with He Xun when he was in Yangzhou.1 Facing their snow at that moment, you thought of me far away; encountering spring as you sent off a traveler it was right to act as you pleased.

I am glad that you did not snap a spray to bring pain at the year’s end, how could I take looking on such, stirring a turmoil of homesickness?

My one tree here by the river is gradually blossoming, day and night it makes my hair grow white still faster.

9.57

In the Evening Climbing to the Belltower of Si’an Temple, Sent to Pei Di (10)

In the evening I lean in the high tower facing snowy peaks, a monk comes without speaking, he rings the bell on his own. Sunlight cast back on the lonely wall, its red almost gathered in, the drifting smoke from a nearby market is azure and in layers.

Often sick and in solitary melancholy, I am ever in lonely quiet, in meeting with my old friend, no time to be free and easy. I know of your intense brooding, grown gaunt from poetry, toward your acquaintances far too indolent in all matters.

---

1 He Xun wrote a poem on plums.
寄贈王十將軍承俊

將軍膽氣雄，
臂懸兩角弓。
纏結青驄馬，
出入錦城中。
時危未授鉞，
勢屈難為功。
賓客滿堂上，
何人高義同。

奉酬李都督表丈早春作

力疾坐清曉，
來詩悲早春。
轉添愁伴客，
更覺老隨人。
紅入桃花嫩，
青歸柳葉新。
望鄉應未已，
四海尚風塵。
9.58

To General Wang Chengjun (10)

The general has a manly spirit in his breast,
two horn-bows hang from his arms.
Wound with ribbons, a dappled gray,
you go in and out of Brocade City.
A time of peril, not yet given command,
your force curbed, hard to achieve merit.
Of the guests that fill the hall
who is your equal in a noble sense of right?

9.59

Respectfully Answering My Uncle, Commander Li’s “Written in Early Spring”

I forced my sick body to sit in the clear dawn,
I was brought a poem grieving for early spring.
Increasingly it added to the sorrow that accompanies a sojourner,
even more I sensed how old age goes along with one.
Pink enters the tender peach blossoms,
green returns to the new willow leaves.
I’m sure you have never stopped gazing toward home,
in this sea-girt world there is still the dust of war.
9.60

題新津北橋樓(得郊字)

望極春城上，
開筵近鳥巢。
白花簷外朵，
青柳檻前梢。
池水觀為政，
廚煙覺遠庖。
西川供客眼，
唯有此江郊。

9.61

遊修覺寺

野寺江天豁，
山扉花竹幽。
詩應有神助，
吾得及春遊。
徑石相縈帶，
川雲自去留。
禪枝宿眾鳥，
漂轉暮歸愁。
9.60

On the Tower of the North Bridge at Xinjin County
(I got the rhyme jiao)

I gaze as far as I can, over the spring city walls,
a banquet is held near the nests of birds.
White flowers, blooms beyond the eaves,
green willows, branch-tips before the railing.
In the pool waters I observe your governance,¹
by cooking smoke can tell you keep far from the kitchen.²
Of what provisions the guest’s eyes in West River,³
for me there is only this meadow by the River.

9.61

Visiting Xiujue Temple

Temple in the wilds, the river and sky spread wide,
its mountain door is hidden in flowers and bamboo.
My poems, I’m sure, have the help of the gods,
I have gotten to visit while it is still spring.
Path and rocks wind around each other,
the stream and clouds go or stay as they will.
On branches for meditation flocks of bird spend the night,
in my driftings and turnings, my twilight return is sad.

¹ That is, the host governs as purely as the waters in the pool.
² From the Record of Rites (Li ji): “A gentleman keeps far away from the kitchen.”
³ What is roughly modern Sichuan was divided into two military jurisdictions (roughly “provinces”), West River and East River.
後遊

寺憶新遊處，
橋憐再渡時。
江山如有待，
花柳更無私。
野潤煙光薄，
沙暄日色遲。
客愁全為滅，
舍此復何之。

絕句漫興九首

眼見客愁愁不醒，
無賴春色到江亭。
即遣花開深造次，
便覺鶯語太丁寧。
A Later Visit

9.62

A Later Visit

At the temple I recall where I recently roamed,
I love the moment of recrossing the bridge.
River and mountains seem to be waiting for me,
flowers and willows show even less favoritism.
The wilderness moist, the misty light thin,
sands radiant, the sunlight moves slowly.
The sojourner’s sadness is entirely reduced by this,
except for here, where else will I go?

9.63–71

Haphazard Inspirations: Quatrains

I

With my own eyes I’ve seen a sojourner’s sorrow, and from sorrow I do not recover,
the rascally look of spring reaches this river pavilion.
At once it makes the flowers bloom, in such a wild hurry,
then I feel the orioles’ chatter is far too heartfelt and earnest.
II
手種桃李非無主，
野老牆低還是家。
恰似春風相欺得，
夜來吹折數枝花。

III
熟知茅齋絕低小，
江上燕子故來頻。
銜泥點汙琴書內，
更接飛蟲打著人。

IV
二月已破三月來，
漸老逢春能幾回。
莫思身外無窮事，
且盡生前有限杯。

V
腸斷江春欲盡頭，
杖藜徐步立芳洲。
顛狂柳絮隨風去，
輕薄桃花逐水流。
II

With my own hands I planted peach and plum, they don’t lack an owner,
this old rustic’s wall may be low, but it still is home.
It seems just as if the spring breeze were bullying me:
last night it blew and snapped off several branches of flowers.

III

Knowing well that my thatch studio is extremely low and small,
swallows on the river still come on purpose all the time.
Mud in beaks, they drop spots of filth among my books and zither,
then catching flying insects, they bump up against me.

IV

The second month is already through, the third month comes along,
gradually aging, I’ll meet the spring how often after this?
Don’t brood on the endless troubles beyond the immediate,
and finish the limited number of cups in the time while you’re alive.

V

Heartbreaking, springtime by the river, almost over now,
I lean on my cane and walk slowly, standing on fragrant isles.
Gone totally mad, willow catkins depart with the wind,
careless loves, peach blossoms follow the water’s current.
VI

懶慢無堪不出村，
呼兒日在掩柴門。
蒼苔濁酒林中靜，
碧水春風野外昏。

VII

糝徑楊花鋪白氈，
點溪荷葉疊青錢。
筍根雉子無人見，
沙上鳧雛傍母眠。

VIII

舍西柔桑葉可拈，
江畔細麥復纖纖。
人生幾何春已夏，
不放香醪如蜜甜。

IX

隔戶楊柳弱嫋嫋，
恰似十五女兒腰。
誰謂朝來不作意，
狂風挽斷最長條。
VI
Lazy, scattered, and of no account, I don’t leave the village, I call to my boy to keep my ramshackle gate shut all day. Gray-green moss and thick ale, calm within my grove, emerald water, spring breeze, it turns twilight in the wilds.

VII
Willow catkins scattered on the path spread a white rug out, lotus leaves dotting the creek layer green cash. No one sees the pheasant chick at the base of bamboo shoots, on the sands the ducklings sleep beside their mother.

VIII
West of my cottage tender mulberry can be pinched with my fingers, by the river the slender wheat is also so thin. How long does human life last?—spring has changed to summer, I won’t set down the fragrant brew, sweet as honey.

IX
Outside my door a willow, pliant and bending, exactly like a fifteen year-old girl’s waist. Who would have thought that at dawn, without paying attention, the wild wind would pull and break the longest branch.
9.72

客至

舍南舍北皆春水，
但见群鸥日日来。
花径不曾缘客扫，
4 蓬门今始为君开。
盘餐市远无兼味，
樽酒家贫只旧醅。
肯与邻翁相对饮，
8 隔篱呼取尽馀杯。

9.73–74

遣意二首

I

啭枝黄鸟近，
泛渚白鸥轻。
一径野花落，
4 孤村春水生。
衰年催酿黍，
细雨更移橙。
A Guest Comes

North of my cottage and south of my cottage spring waters everywhere, all I see are the flocks of gulls coming day after day. My flowered path has never yet been swept on account of a guest, my ramshackle gate for the first time today is open because of you. For dinner the market is far, there are no diverse flavors, for ale my household is poor, there is only a former brew. If you are willing to sit and drink with the old man next door, I’ll call over the hedge to get him and we’ll finish the last cups.

Speaking What’s on My Mind

I Warbling in branches, yellow orioles close by; floating by isles, white gulls light. Wildflowers fall all along the path, by the solitary village spring waters rise. Waning years make me hurry brewing millet beer, in a fine rain I again transplant orange-tree saplings.

1 Original note: “Delighted that Magistrate Cui drops by” 洗崔明府相過.
漸喜交遊絕，
幽居不用名。

II

簷影微微落，
津流脈脈斜。
野船明細火，
宿雁聚圓沙。
雲掩初弦月，
香傳小樹花。
鄰人有美酒，
稚子夜能賒。
I feel increasing delight in having cut off social obligations, living in seclusion I need no fame.

II

Shadows of eaves, faintly sinking away, the current at the ford slants past my fixed gaze. A boat in the wilds, its tiny fire bright, wild geese, spending the night, flock on a round mound of sand. Clouds cover over the new crescent moon, a scent is carried from flowers on small trees. My neighbor has excellent ale, tonight my boy can go borrow some.