20.1–3

秋日寄題鄭監湖上亭三首

I

碧草違春意，
沅湘萬里秋。
池要山簡馬，
月淨庾公樓。
磨滅餘篇翰，
平生一釣舟。
高唐寒浪減，
仿佛識昭丘。

II

新作湖邊宅，
遠聞賓客過。
自須開竹徑，
誰道避雲蘿。
官序潘生拙，
才名賈傅多。
舍舟應卜地，
鄰接意如何。
20.1–3

On an Autumn Day, Sent On the Topic of Director Zheng’s Pavilion By the Lake

I

Emerald plants have lost the mood of spring,
ten thousand leagues of autumn on Yuan and Xiang.
The pool invites Shan Jian’s horse,1
moonlight pure on Yu Liang’s tower.2
Time wastes away, the writings remain,
all my life, a single fishing boat.
At Gaotang the cold waves diminish,
and I can vaguely make out King Zhao’s mound.3

II

A recently built cottage by the lake,
from afar I’ve heard of guests stopping by.
He should open a path through the bamboo,
who says he is seeking refuge in wisteria vines?
Rank and office, as clumsy as Pan Yue;4
talent and fame, more than Tutor Jia Yi’s.5
When I tie up my boat, I’ll surely choose a spot there—
how would you feel if I lived next door?

1 *Shan Jian.
2 Comparing Zheng Shen to Yu Liang of the Eastern Jin who, when governing Wuchang, went with his staff to the south tower to enjoy the moonlight. This was near Jingzhou.
3 King Zhao of Chu, here referring to the area of Jingzhou downstream, also the site of the Xi Family pool (in Xiangyang), where *Shan Jian drank.
4 The third-century poet Pan Yue described his ineptness in his “Poetic Exposition on Living in Idleness.”
5 *Jia Yi.
III

暫阻蓬萊閣，
終為江海人。
揮金應物理，
拖玉豈吾身。
羹煮秋蓴滑，
杯迎露菊新。
賦詩分氣象，
佳句莫頻頻。

20.4–8

秋野五首

I

秋野日疏蕪，
寒江動碧虛。
繫舟蠻井絡，
卜宅楚村墟。
龍熟從人打，
葵荒欲自锄。
盤飧老夫食，
分減及溪魚。
For the while cut off from Penglai Pavilion,\(^1\) you become at last someone of river and lakes. You respond to the situation by spending your money,\(^2\) the dangling jade is certainly not for us.\(^3\) For soup you boil the slippery autumn water-shield, your goblet welcomes the fresh dewy chrysanthemum. I’ll share the atmosphere there, composing poems so don’t let those fine lines come too often.\(^4\)

20.4–8

Autumn Wilds

I

Autumn wilds grow more leafless and scraggly each day, the cold river stirs the sapphire sky. I tied up my boat to the Wellrope of the Mon tribes,\(^5\) sited my cottage in a hamlet of Chu. When the dates are ripe I’ll let someone else knock them down,\(^6\) if my mallows get weed-grown, I’ll hoe them myself. Of this plateful of an old man’s meal, I’ll share a portion, even with the fish in the stream.

---

1 The imperial library.
2 In the Western Han, Shu Guang retired and returned home. He asked his family members how much remained of the money he had sent. With that money he held a great party for all his family and friends.
3 That is, wearing the pendants of a court official.
4 That is, don’t write about everything; leave something for me.
5 This is a constellation associated with Mount Min in Sichuan and the whole region.
6 Specifically a neighbor, an impoverished, childless widow.
II

易識浮生理，
難教一物違。
水深魚極樂，
林茂鳥知歸。
衰老甘貧病，
榮華有是非。
秋風吹几杖，
不厭北山薇。

III

禮樂攻吾短，
山林引興長。
掉頭紗帽側，
曝背竹書光。
風落收松子，
天寒割蜜房。
稀疏小紅翠，
駐屐近微香。

IV

遠岸秋沙白，
連山晚照紅。
II

Easy to recognize the pattern in this life adrift—
you can’t make a single creature go against its nature.
Where the water is deep, the fish have the utmost joy;
4 birds knows to return where the woods are most leafy.
Aging and infirm, I accept poverty and sickness,
in prominence and glory there are judgments to be made.
The autumn wind blows on my cane and armrest,
8 I do not weary of north mountain’s wild beans.

III

Music and Rites work on my shortcomings,
mountain forests make my elation last.
I toss my head, my gauze cap tilts,
4 and sun my back, the light on my bamboo books.
I gather pinecones brought down by the wind,
I hack open honeycombs as the weather gets cold.
Few and sparse, tiny reds and azures,¹
8 I halt my clogs close to faint scent.

IV

On distant shores the autumn sands are white,
linked hills turn red in the late sunshine.

¹ Autumn flowers.
潛鱗輸駭浪，
歸翼會高風。
砧響家家發，
樵聲箇箇同。
飛霜任青女，
賜被隔南宮。

身許麒麟畫，
年衰鴛鷺群。
大江秋易盛，
空峽夜多聞。
徑隱千重石，
帆留一片雲。
兒童解蠻語，
不必作參軍。
Autumn Wilds

Submerged scales go along with leaping waves,
4 homeward wings catch the high wind.
   Echoes of fulling mallets from every household,¹
   sounds of woodcutters, each one alike.
   The flying frost is the charge of the Blue Maid—
8 she grants me a blanket apart from the Southern Palace.²

V

I vowed that I would be painted in Unicorn Gallery,³
in years now infirm, with the flocks of egrets and ducks.⁴
The great river easily rises in autumn,
4 in the empty gorges it can often be heard at night.
   A path shadowed by rock in a thousand folds,
   a sail lingering, a single swathe of cloud.
   My boy understands the speech of the Mon folk,
8 but he won’t necessarily become an adjutant.⁵

¹ Preparing padded clothing for winter.
² The blanket of frost in the current scene is far from the blanket he was given when staying overnight in attendance at the palace in Chang’an.
³ Officials who achieved conspicuous merit in the service of the dynasty would have their portraits painted in Unicorn Gallery.
⁴ To “take one’s place in the ranks of egrets and ducks” figuratively referred to attendance at court. Du Fu is ironic here, finding himself with the real birds.
⁵ This alludes to a story about the fourth-century figure He Long, who used the language of the southern tribes in a poem. When the Generalissimo Huan Wen asked him why he did this, He Long replied that in his career he had only been given the lowly post of adjutant among the southern tribes, so how could he avoid their language? Du Fu takes this a step further: his boys, growing up among the southern tribes, cannot avoid using words from their language; but they cannot hope even to attain the lowly post of adjutant.
20.9–11

課小豎鋤斫舍北果林，枝蔓荒穢，淨訖移床三首

I

病枕依茅棟，
荒鉏淨果林。
背堂資僻遠，
在野興清深。
山雉防求敵，
江猿應獨吟。
泄雲高不去，
隱几亦無心。

II

眾壑生寒早，
長林卷霧齊。
青蟲懸就日，
朱果落封泥。
薄俗防人面，
全身學馬蹄。
吟詩坐回首，
隨意葛巾低。
20.9–11

Overseeing My Servant in Hoeing and Pruning the Fruit Orchard
North of my Cottage; the Branches and Creepers had Run Wild. When
he Finished Cleaning it Up, I Moved my Couch There.

I

Sick, I lay pillowed under beams with thatch,
a hoe in the overgrowth cleared up my fruit orchard.
My back to the hall, I am provided with remoteness,
  my elation is clear and deep out here in the wilds.
The mountain pheasant fends off those seeking a fight,
river gibbons answer my solitary chanting.
Clouds oozing out are high and don’t leave,
leaning on my armrest, I too have no will.¹

II

All the ravines get cold early,
fog rolls up level through the tall forest.
Green insects hang, going to the sunlight,
  red fruits fallen, encased in mud.
Heartless ways here, I fend off those only whose faces are human,²
I study “Horse’s Hooves” to preserve my life.³
Chanting poems, I sit and look back,
and let my homespun bandana slip down low.

¹ This refers to *Tao Qian’s “The Return”: “The clouds have no will, leaving the crags.”
² Echoing the phrase “face of a human being, heart of a beast.”
³ A chapter in the Zhuangzi on preserving one’s natural state.
III

籬弱門何向，
沙虛岸只摧。
日斜魚更食，
客散鳥還來。
寒水光難定，
秋山響易哀。
天涯稍曛黑，
倚杖更徘徊。

20.12

反照

反照開巫峽，
寒空半有無。
已低魚復暗，
不盡白鹽孤。
荻岸如秋水，
松門似畫圖。
牛羊識童僕，
既夕應傳呼。
III

My hedge is weak, one can't tell where the gate faces, sands are not solid, the shore only collapses. As the sun gets low, the fish feed again, when guests go their ways, the birds come back. Cold waters, their light never steady, the echoes in autumn mountains easily grow mournful. The ends of the earth gradually darken to blackness, I lean on my staff and pace about again.

20.12

Sunlight Cast Back

Last sunlight cast back opens up the Wu Gorges; the cold sky, half there, half not there: Already lower, Yufu Bank is again in darkness not entirely gone, White Salt Cliff stands alone. Shores of reeds like autumn waters;¹ Pinegate Gorge is just like a painting. Oxen and sheep recognize the herdboys— since it’s evening, they respond to the calls passed along.

---

¹ Referring to the white reed flowers.
20.13

向夕

畎畝孤城外，
江村亂水中。
深山催短景，
喬木易高風。
鶴下雲汀近，
雞棲草屋同。
琴書散明燭，
長夜始堪終。

20.14

天池

天池馬不到，
嵐壁鳥纔通。
百頃青雲杪，
曾波白石中。
鬱纡騰秀氣，
蕭瑟浸寒空。
直對巫山峽，
兼疑夏禹功。
20.13
Towards Evening

Farmlands outside the lone city wall,  
river villages amid tangles of streams.  
Deep mountains hasten the short daylight,  
tall trees easily catch the wind.  
A crane descends nearby on a cloudy beach,  
chickens roost together with us under a thatch roof.  
Zither and books, scattered in bright candlelight,  
only thus can I pass the long night through.

20.14
Pool of Heaven

No horse can reach it, Pool of Heaven,  
over hazy cliffs only birds get through.  
Covering a hundred acres at the tip of blue clouds,  
layers of waves among the white rocks.  
In swelling coils its fine vapors mount,  
in the whistling wind it steeps the cold sky.  
It directly faces Mount Wu and Gorges,  
and I suspect it was also the work of Yu.¹

¹ Great Yu cut the channel of the Yangzi.
復愁十二首

魚龍開闢有，
菱芡古今同。
聞道奔雷黑，
初看浴日紅。
飄零神女雨，
斷續楚王風。
欲問支機石，
如臨獻寶宮。
九秋驚雁序，
萬里狎漁翁。
更是無人處，
誅茅任薄躬。

20.15–26

復愁十二首

人煙生處僻，
虎跡過新蹄。
野鶻翻窺草，
村船逆上溪。
Fish and dragons were here at its first creation, 
water-chestnuts and caltrops, same in present and past. 
I’ve heard that it blackens with speeding thunder, 
now for the first time I watch it redden, bathing the sun. 
The goddess’s rain comes sprinkling down,¹ 
the Chu king’s wind comes intermittently.² 
I would seek the rock that held up the loom,³ 
one is as if looking down to the palace where jewels were presented.⁴ 
Autumn’s ninth month alarms the wild-goose ranks, 
over thousands of leagues, familiar with old fishermen. 
Once again here is a place without men, 
I should build a thatched cottage for this poor old body.

20.15–26

Worried Again

Where the smoke of dwellings rises is remote, 
tiger tracks, recent paws have passed. 
In the wilds a falcon wings, peering down into the plants, 
a village boat goes on the creek upstream.

¹ The goddess of Wu Mountain, who visited the King of Chu in sleep and on leaving 
said that she was the “clouds of dawn” and the “evening rain.”
² This is the “good wind” described in the “Poetic Exposition on Wind,” attributed 
to *Song Yu.
³ *Riding the raft.
⁴ When King Mu came back from his travels, he brought gifts to the god of the 
Yellow River.
II
釣艇收繙盡，
昏鴉接翅稀。
月生初學扇，
雲細不成衣。

III
萬國尚防寇，
故園今若何。
昔歸相識少，
早已戰場多。

IV
身覺省郎在，
家須農事歸。
年深荒草徑，
老恐失柴扉。

V
金糾鏤箭鏃，
皂尾製旗竿。
一自風塵起，
猶嗟行路難。
II

Fishing skiffs have all pulled in their lines,
twilight crows, wing to wing, grow few.
The moon appears, first imitating a fan,
the clouds so thin they don’t form its clothes.

III

Thousands of domains, still fending off marauders,
what is my garden at home like now?
When I went back long ago, there were few that I recognized,
it had been often a battlefield long before.¹

IV

I realize that, a ministry director, I’m still here,
but I should take my family back to farm.
As years pass the paths run wild with plants,
old, I fear not being able to find my ramshackle gate.

V

They carved arrowheads adorned with metal threads,
they fashioned flagpoles hung with black horse-tails.
Ever since war’s dust first rose in the wind,
I have always still been sighing at hard traveling.

¹ This refers to Du Fu’s home near Luoyang.
VI
胡虜何曾盛，
干戈不肯休。
閭閻聽小子，
談話覓封侯。

VII
貞觀銅牙弩，
開元錦獸張。
花門小箭好，
此物棄沙場。

VIII
今日翔麟馬，
先宜駕鼓車。
無勞問河北，
諸將角榮華。

IX
任轉江淮粟，
休添苑囿兵。
由來貔虎士，
不滿鳳凰城。
VI
When were the Hu barbarians ever really ascendant?—
some just won’t stop the clash of arms.
I listened to young people by the village gate
chat about seeking to be made a lord.¹

VII
“Bronzetooth Crossbow” of the Zhengan,
“Brocade Beast Strung” of the Kaiyuan.²
The little arrows of the Huamen Uighurs were better,
and these things were cast off in the sand.³

VIII
These days Soaring Unicorn⁴
is deemed fit to hitch to the drum carriage.⁵
Don’t bother to ask about Hebei,
the generals are competing for glory.

IX
Let them transport grain from Jianghuai,
but stop increasing the palace troops.⁶
Never did our tiger and wildcat troops
fill Phoenix City.⁷

¹ Through victory in battle
² Two famous bows of Taizong’s reign and Xuanzong’s reign respectively.
³ That is, since the Tang started depending on Uighur horse archers, the Tang has
   abandoned its famous weapons—and, by implication, abandoned reliance on elite
   Han Chinese troops.
⁴ One of Taizong’s famous horses.
⁵ Part of the emperor’s equipage when he left the palace. That is, the fine steed would
   not be put to its proper use.
⁶ The palace army was well fed, but there was a shortage of grain for the city.
⁷ Chang’an.
復愁十二首

X
江上亦秋色，
火雲終不移。
巫山猶錦樹，
南國且黃鸝。

XI
每恨陶彭澤，
無錢對菊花。
如今九日至，
自覺酒須賒。

XII
病減詩仍拙，
吟多意有餘。
莫看江總老，
猶被賞時魚。
X

By the river you do see the look of autumn,
but the fiery clouds never move away.
On Mount Wu the trees are still like brocade,
and for the while in the south, there are orioles.

XI

I’ve always felt bad that Tao of Pengze\(^1\)
faced the chrysanthemums penniless.
But now when the Double Ninth comes
I realize I’ll have to buy my ale on credit myself.

XII

My illness lessens, my poems are still clumsy,
I chant often, still more I want to say.
Don’t look on Jiang Zong in old age,\(^2\)
still wearing the fish-badge from when he was rewarded.

---

1 *Tao Qian.
2 The sixth-century poet Jiang Zong served the Liang and Chen and lived on to serve the Sui.
白鹽危嶠北，
赤甲古城東。        
平地一川穩，
高山四面同。
煙霜淒野日，
粳稻熟天風。
人事傷蓬轉，
吾將守桂叢。

東屯復瀼西，
一種住青溪。        
來往皆茅屋，
淹留為稻畦。
市喧宜近利，
林僻此無蹊。
若訪衰翁語，
須令賤客迷。
I

North of the sheer pinnacle of White Salt Mountain, east of the ancient fortress at Red Shell, is level land secure with a river, high mountains alike on all sides. Mist and frost chill the sun in the wilds, the rice ripens in wind from the heavens.

In human affairs I lament being a dandelion puff tossed along,

II

East Camp and Rangxi,

I stay by a clear stream in both alike. Coming and going, each with a thatched cottage, but I linger here because of the rice fields. Noise of the market, fitting for profit, the woods are remote, there is no path here. If someone says they want to visit this decrepit old man,

1 The wilderness dwelling of the recluse.
2 Original note: “At Rangxi I live near the market”瀼西居近市.
III

道北馮都使，
高齋見一川。
子能渠細石，
吾亦沼清泉。

IV

牢落西江外，
參差北戶間。
久游巴子宅，
臥病楚人山。

幽獨移佳境，
清深隔遠關。
寒空見鸎鸎，
回首憶朝班。
III

North of the road is capital legate Feng’s,
from his high study can be seen a river.
You can make a sluice of little stones,
4 and I too can pool up a clear spring.
We are alike in our surroundings,
as for scrapwood gates we have them right here.¹
I surely will spend my days chopping and burning off fields,
8 not knowing when I’ll unmoor my boat.

IV

Dreary here beyond West River,
not quite even, my north-facing door.²
Long I have roamed the lodgings of Ba,
4 I have lain sick in the mountains of Chu folk.
Seclusion and solitude, as fine scenery changed,
clear and deep, cut off from distant passes.
In the cold sky I see ducks and egrets,
8 I turn my head, recalling court ranks.³

---
¹ Presumably referring to access to water.
² Du Fu’s house faces north, opposite Feng’s.
³ Ducks and egrets were a common figure for the officials attending court in their uniforms.
20.31–32

社日兩篇

I

九農成德業，
百禱發光輝。
報效神如在，
馨香舊不違。
南翁巴曲醉，
北雁塞聲微。
尚想東方朔，
詼諧割肉歸。

II

陳平亦分肉，
太史竟論功。
今日江南老，
他時渭北童。
歡娛看絕塞，
涕淚落秋風。
鴛鷺迴金闕，
誰憐病峽中。
20.31–32

Festival Day: two poems

I

All the farming activities complete the store of virtue, the hundred rites display the splendor. In their efforts to repay, the god is as if present, the fragrances do not miss their former times. Old southerners, drunk with Ba tunes, wild geese from the north, frontier sounds faint. I still can imagine Dongfang Shuo, with a witty remark cutting off meat and going home.¹

II

Chen Ping too apportioned meat,² the Grand Historian at last discussed his merit.³ Today, this old man in the Southland, was in other times a lad north of the Wei. I watch revels on this farthest frontier, my tears fall in the autumn wind. The ducks and egrets return from the golden towers,⁴ who pities one sick in the gorges?

---

¹ On a festival Han Wudi ordered pieces of meat cut for his court officials, but the official who was supposed to cut came late. Dongfang Shuo, who was eager to go home early, drew his sword and cut off a piece of meat. When the emperor later reprimanded him, he replied: “drawing a sword and cutting off a piece of meat is heroic; not cutting off much shows lack of greed; taking it home to one’s wife and children shows kindness.”

² In the Grand Scribe’s Records we read how Chen Ping was originally poor, and on a festival day divided the meat fairly, a mark of his capacity to serve in government.

³ Sima Qian, the author of Grand Scribe’s Records.

⁴ Ducks and egrets are figures for officials in court dress.
八月十五夜月二首

I

滿目飛明鏡，
歸心折大刀。
轉蓬行地遠，
攀桂仰天高。
水路疑霜雪，
林棲見羽毛。
此時瞻白兔，
直欲數秋毫。

II

稍下巫山峽，
猶銜白帝城。
氣沈全浦暗，
輪仄半樓明。
刁斗皆催曉，
蟾蜍且自傾。
張弓倚殘魄，
不獨漢家營。
20.33–34

Moon on the Night of the Fifteenth of the Eighth Month

I

That bright mirror flies, filling my eyes,
homesick heart, a broken great sword.1
Tossed dandelion puff, the places it goes are far,
4 having pulled on the cassia branch, I look up to the heavens’ height.2
The water route seems like frost and snow,
I can see feathers and down at roost in the woods.
At this moment I look on the white Hare,3
8 and can virtually count its autumn hairs.

II

It gradually lowers in the Wu Mountain gorge,
still holding White Emperor Castle in its light.
Sunken in vapor, the whole shore is dark,
4 as the orb slants, half the tower is bright.
Watch-kettles all hurry the morning along,
and the Toad tips downward on its own.4
Stretching a bow depending on fading moonlight
8 was not only in the camp of the House of Han.

1 The “broken great sword” means that it has no “guard,” huan 環, punning on no “return,” huan 還.
2 Here, the cassia tree that was supposed to grow in the moon. “Pulling on the cassia branch” also suggests being in reclusion.
3 The Hare in the moon.
4 The Toad in the moon.
20.35

十六夜玩月

舊挹金波爽，
皆傳玉露秋。
關山隨地闊，
河漢近人流。
谷口樵歸唱，
孤城笛起愁。
巴童渾不寢，
半夜有行舟。

20.36

十七夜對月

秋月仍圓夜，
江村獨老身。
捲篋還照客，
倚杖更隨人。
光射潛虯動，
明翻宿鳥頻。
茅齋依橘柚，
清切露華新。
20.35

Enjoying the Moon on the Sixteenth

I recently ladled out the freshness of its golden waves,\(^1\)
everything brings news of an autumn of jade dew.
Barrier mountains vast everywhere with the lay of the land,
the River of Stars flows near to me.
From valley’s mouth woodsmen come back singing,
on the lonely wall a flute gives rise to sorrow.
The lads of Ba are generally not asleep—
at midnight there are boats underway.

20.36

Facing the Moon on the Seventeenth

A night when the autumn moon is still round,
a river village, the person old and alone.
Roll up the curtain, it still shines on a sojourner,
it keeps following me as I go with my cane.
Where its rays shoot, the sunken dragon stirs,
its brightness sets sleeping birds into flight often.
Thatched study by oranges and pomelos,
clear and sharp, the glitter of dew is fresh.

\(^1\) “Golden waves” is a figure for moonbeams.
20.37

曉望

白帝更聲盡，
陽臺曙色分。
高峰寒上日，
疊嶺宿霾雲。
地坼江帆隱，
天清木葉聞。
荊扉對麋鹿，
應共爾為群。

20.38

日暮

牛羊下來久，
各已閉柴門。
風月自清夜，
江山非故園。
石泉流暗壁，
草露滴秋根。
頭白燈明裏，
何須花燼繁。
Dawn View

The watch sounds cease at White Emperor Castle, morning’s colors discerned on the Terrace of Light.\(^1\) High peaks coldly send up the sun, layered ridges overnight buried in cloud. The land splits open, a river sail is hidden, the heavens clear, leaves on the trees are heard. My brushwood gate faces deer— I should be flocking together with you.

---

Twilight

The cattle and sheep came down long ago, each ramshackle gate has been barred. Wind and moon, the night naturally clear, river and mountains, not the garden of home. Stony streams flow down cliffs unseen, dew on plants drips on autumn roots. My hair is white in the bright lamplight, why must the glowing sparks be so dense?\(^2\)

---

\(^1\) Where the goddess lives on Wu Mountain.
\(^2\) This should be a sign of some happy occurrence, but Du Fu sees none in his present life.
暝

日下四山陰，
山庭嵐氣侵。
牛羊歸徑險，
鳥雀聚枝深。
正枕當星劍，
收書動玉琴。
半扉開燭影，
欲掩見清砧。

朞

杖藜尋晚巷，
炙背近牆暄。
人見幽居僻，
吾知拙養尊。
朝廷問府主，
耕稼學山村。
歸翼飛棲定，
寒燈亦閉門。
20.39

Darkness

The sun goes down, surrounding mountains in shadow, foothill vapors creep into my mountain yard. Perilous, the path on which sheep and cattle return, birds gather where branches are deepest away. I straighten my pillow facing stars on my sword, I gather my books and stir the jade zither. Half ajar, my door reveals candlelight, about to close it, I hear the clear fulling blocks.

20.40

Late in the Day

With a goosefoot cane I go down the lane late, I sunned my back in the warm light near the wall. Others see my secluded dwelling as out of the way, but I understand the importance of nurturing simplicity. As for the court, I ask the district head, I imitate mountain villages in plowing and sowing. When the wings return to their roosts and are still, in cold lamplight I too will shut my gate.

---

1 Fine swords were forged with star patterns.
20.41

夜

絶岸風威動，
寒房燭影微。
嶺猿霜外宿，
江鳥夜深飛。
獨坐親雄劍，
哀歌歎短衣。
煙塵繞闊闊，
白首壯心違。

20.42

九月一日過孟十二倉曹十四主簿兄弟

藜杖侵寒露，
蓬門啟曙煙。
力稀經樹歇，
老困撥書眠。
秋覺追隨盡，
來因孝友偏。
清談見滋味，
爾輩可忘年。
20.41

Night

The wind’s might shakes the sheer bank,
in my cold chamber the candle’s light is faint.
Gibbons on the ridge stay out beyond the frost,
river birds fly deep in the night.
I sit alone feeling close to my male sword,¹
with songs of lament I sigh for my short robes.²
Smoke and dust fill the palace gates,
white-haired, the hopes of my prime gone awry.

20.42

On the First Day of the Ninth Month, Stopping by the Home of
Meng (12) of the Granaries Section and His Brother (14), the Assistant
Magistrate

My goosefoot cane goes into the cold dew,
a rustic gate opens to morning smoke.
My strength is little, passing a tree I rest,
old age makes me drowsy, I sleep among open books.
With autumn I realize that social visits are over,
the reason I came was your exceptional filiality and brotherliness.
I know the flavor of your pure discussions,
with your sort one can forget differences in age.

¹ *Sword-dragon.
² The mark of a commoner.
20.43

孟倉曹步趾領新酒醬二物滿器見遺老夫

楚岸通秋屐，
胡床面夕畦。
籍糟分汁滓，
甕醬落提攜。

飯糲添香味，
朋來有醉泥。
理生那免俗，
方法報山妻。

20.44

送孟十二倉曹赴東京選

君行別老親，
此去苦家貧。
藻鏡留連客，
江山憔悴人。

秋風楚竹冷，
夜雪鞏梅春。
朝夕高堂念，
應宜彩服新。
20.43

Meng of the Granaries Section Comes on Foot to Give This Old Man Full Pots of New Ale and Bean Sauce

Chu shores gave passage to autumn clogs,
as my folding chair faced the evening fields.
Having strained the lees, you separated the liquid from the dregs,
the pot of bean sauce spills over as you carry it.
One will add fragrant flavor when I dine on coarse meal,
as for the other, when friends come we will get drunk.
How can one avoid ordinary things in managing life?—
please tell my rustic wife how to make these.

20.44

Seeing Off Meng (12) of the Granaries Section Who Is Setting Off For the Selection Procedure in the Eastern Capital

Soon you will part from your old parents,
this departure is from the hardship of your family’s poverty.
The mirror of evaluation will detain the sojourner,
mountains and rivers, a person worn by cares.
Autumn wind, the Chu bamboo grows cold,
snow at night, the plums of Gong turn spring.
Dawn and dusk your parents in the high hall will think on you,
I’m sure it will be right for new brightly colored robes.

---

1 After one’s term of office expired, an official had to go to one of the capitals for reappointment. Candidates often had to wait a considerable interval for a new office.
2 Near Luoyang, where Meng is going. This implies that he leaves in autumn and will reach Luoyang at the beginning of spring.
3 "Laolaizi."
20.45

憑孟倉曹將書覓土婁舊莊

平居喪亂後，
不到洛陽岑。
為歷雲山問，
無辭荊棘深。
北風黃葉下，
南浦白頭吟。
十載江湖客，
茫茫遲暮心。

20.46

簡吳郎司法

有客乘舸自忠州，
遣騎安置瀼西頭。
古堂本買藉疏豁，
借汝遷居停宴遊。
雲石熒熒高葉曙，
江風颯颯亂帆秋。
卻為姻婭過逢地，
許坐曾軒數散愁。
Depending on Meng of the Granaries Section to Take a Letter and Seek Out My Old Estate at Tulou

In my life after all the death and destruction
I have never made it back to Luoyang’s peaks.
Go through cloudy hills to find out for me,
don’t refuse because thorns and brambles are too deep.
In the north wind yellow leaves come down,
at south bank, the “Song of White Hair.”
For ten years a sojourner on rivers and lakes,
lost in a daze, heart in its twilight years.

A Note to Legal Administrator Wu

There was a traveler on a barge coming from Zhongzhou,
I sent a rider and lodged him at Rangxi.
This old hall was basically bought on account of its spaciousness,
I’ll let you come and stay here, having ceased feasts and excursions.
Clouds and rocks flash with light, high leaves in the morning,
the river winds are whistling, wildly driving autumn sails.
But because it is a place where in-laws can get together,
permit me to sit by the porch railing and often dispel my sorrows.

From this poem it seems that Du Fu is loaning the use of his Rangxi house to Administrator Wu, while he takes up lodgings in East Camp to oversee the grain harvest.

1 The estate is by Shouyang Mountain near Luoyang.
2 “South bank” was the poetic reference for any site of parting.
3 Wu may have been Du Fu’s son-in-law, but he may also have been a remote relation by marriage.
20.47

又呈吳郎

堂前撲棗任西鄰，
無食無兒一婦人。
不為困窮寧有此，
祇緣恐懼轉須親。

即防遠客雖多事，
使插疏籬卻甚真。
已訴徵求貧到骨，
正思戎馬淚盈巾。

20.48

晚晴吳郎見過北舍

圃畦新雨潤，
愧子廢鋤來。
竹杖交頭拄，
柴扉隔徑開。
欲棲群鳥亂，
未去小童催。
明日重陽酒，
相迎自醺醺。
20.47

Another Presented to Administrator Wu

I let my western neighbor pick dates from in front of the hall, a single woman with no child and nothing to eat. If she were not in dire poverty, why would she do this?—only because she is so fearful one must be even more friendly. Although she goes too far in avoiding the visitor from afar, if you put up a sparse hedge, she will take it too naively.¹ She has already complained that tax demands have made her poor to the bone,

On a Clear Late Afternoon, Being Visited By Administrator Wu in My North Cottage

The garden field is wet with recent rain, I’m put to shame that you dropped your hoe to come. We were propped on our bamboo canes, head to head, the ramshackle gate is open across the path. Flocks of birds in confusion about to roost, not yet leaving, your young servant urges you. Tomorrow for Double Ninth festival ale

1 In other words, she will think that you are no longer going to let her pick dates.
九日五首

I

重陽獨酌杯中酒，
抱病豈登江上臺。
竹葉於人既無分，
4 菊花從此不須開。
殊方日落玄猿哭，
舊國霜前白雁來。
弟妹蕭條各何往，
8 千戈衰謝兩相催。

II

舊日重陽日，
傳杯不放杯。
即今蓬鬢改，
4 但愧菊花開。
北闕心長戀，
西江首獨回。
茱萸賜朝士，
8 難得一枝來。
I

I pour alone on the Double Ninth the ale in the cup,
feeling sick, how could I climb the terrace by the river?
Since “bamboo leaf” has no fated affinity for me,¹
from this point on the chrysanthemums don’t need to bloom.
The sun sets in a strange land, the black gibbons weep,
in my former land before the frost white geese came.
Gloomily brooding on brothers and sister, where has each gone?—
a world in arms and my own wasting away, both press me on.

II

In former days on the Double Ninth
we passed cups without setting them down.
But today my tangled locks have changed,
and I am just ashamed before chrysanthemums blooming.
The heart always yearns for the northern palace gates,
to West River the head turns alone.
Ailanthus was presented to court officers,²
hard to get a single spray here.

¹ “Bamboo leaf” was a kind of ale.
² Ailanthus sprays were traditionally put in the hair on the Double Ninth.
九日五首

III

舊與蘇司業，
兼臨鄭廣文。
采花香泛泛，
坐客醉紛紛。
野樹歌還倚，
秋砧醒卻聞。
歡娛兩冥漠，
西北有孤雲。

IV

故里樊川菊，
登高素滻源。
他時一笑後，
今日幾人存。
巫峽蟠江路，
終南對國門。
繫舟身萬里，
伏枕淚雙痕。
為客裁烏帽，
從兒具綠尊。
佳辰對群臣，
愁絕更堪論。
III

Formerly with Director of Studies Su,\(^1\)
accompanied by Instructor Zheng as well,\(^2\)
we would pick the blooms whose scent wafted,
the guests would get drunk in crowds.
Singing, then leaning against trees in the wilds,
sobering, I hear the autumn fulling blocks.
All merriment is lost along with those two,
in the northwest is a lone cloud.\(^3\)

IV

Home village, Fan Stream’s chrysanthemums,
we would climb high at the source of the pale Chan.
After the laughter of those other days,
how many now survive?
Wu Gorges, the coiling course of the river,
Mount Zhongnan facing the capital’s gates.
Tied up boat, someone thousands of leagues away,
bedridden, two tracks of tears.
As a sojourner I make a black hat,\(^4\)
with my sons I ready the cups with green ale.
On this holiday I face packs of bandits,
in utter sorrow can I bear to say more?

---

1  Su Yuanming.
2  Zheng Qian.
3  An opening image in third-century poetry.
4  The mark of a recluse.
登高

風急天高猿嘯哀，
渚清沙白鳥飛迴。
無邊落木蕭蕭下，
不盡長江滾滾來。

萬里悲秋常作客，
百年多病獨登臺。
艱難苦恨繁霜鬢，
潦倒新停濁酒杯。

覃山人隱居

南極老人自有星，
北山移文誰勒銘。
徵君已去獨松菊，
哀壑無光留戶庭。

予見亂離不得已，
子知出處必須經。
高車駟馬帶傾覆，
悵望秋天虛翠屏。
20.53

Climbing the Heights

The wind blows hard, the heavens, high, gibbons howl in lament, isles clear, sands white, where birds turn in flight. Endless trees shed their leaves that descend in the whistling wind, unending, the long River comes on churning. Grieving for fall across ten thousand leagues, always a traveler, often sick in this century of life I climb the terrace alone. In hardship I bitterly resent these tangled, frost-white locks, down and out, I recently quit cups of thick ale.

20.54

Mountain Man Qin’s Hermitage

“Old man of the southern pole,” he naturally has a star,1 “Declaration of North Mountain,” who would carve the inscription?2 Summoned, you have already gone, pine and chrysanthemums left all alone,3 the mournful ravine lacks all light, your house and yard remain. I have seen war and separation and could do nothing about it; you knew that for service and retirement you must go through them.4 A high carriage and four-horse team bring danger of tipping over,5 in depression I gaze at the autumn skies and the insubstantial azure cliff.

1 The Old Man Star, associated with longevity, here probably referring to Qin.
2 Kong Zhigui’s famous satire on the recluse Zhou Yong, who immediately answered a court summons to serve. Qin has perhaps gone off to serve.
3 “Pine and chrysanthemum” were what *Tao Qian imagined would have survived in his garden in his “Return.”
4 That is, I live in obscurity like a recluse because I have no choice; you perhaps had to go through serving to understand its perils and the virtues of a recluse’s life.
5 That is, high office is filled with perils.
東屯月夜

抱疾漂萍老，
防邊舊穀屯。
春農親異俗，
歲月在衡門。

青女霜楓重，
黃牛峽水喧。
泥留虎鬥跡，
月掛客愁村。

喬木澄稀影，
輕雲倚細根。
數驚聞雀噪，
暫睡想猿蹲。

日轉東方白，
風來北斗昏。
天寒不成寢，
無夢有歸魂。
Moonlit Night at East Camp

Sick old man, duckweed swept along,
defending frontiers, a former grain-producing camp.\(^1\)
In spring farming I grow fond of the strange ways here,
months and years pass right at my barred gate.
The Blue Maid, frosty maples heavy,\(^2\)
waters of Yellow Ox Gorge are noisy.
Mud retains the tracks of tigers fighting,
the moon hangs above this village of a sojourner’s sadness.
Sparse shadows of tall trees show clearly,
light clouds rest along their small roots.\(^3\)
Often startled hearing the sparrows’ ruckus,
sleeping a while, I imagine the gibbons crouching.
The sun turns, the east grows white,
a breeze comes, and the Northern Dipper fades.
The weather so cold I cannot get to sound sleep,
dreamless, there is a soul longing to go home.

---

1. East Camp was made by the separatist general Gongsun Shu to feed his troops during Wang Mang’s era in between the Western and Eastern Han.
2. The Blue Maid is in charge of sending frost.
3. Rock. Mountains are “roots of clouds.”
20.56

東屯北崦

盜賊浮生困，
誅求異俗貧。
空村惟見鳥，
落日未逢人。
步壑風吹面，
看松露滴身。
遠山回白首，
戰地有黃塵。

20.57–58

從驛次草堂復至東屯二首

1

峽內歸田客，
江邊借馬騎。
非尋戴安道，
似向習家池。
峽險風煙僻，
天寒橘柚垂。
20.56

North Mountain at East Camp

Rebels put this life adrift in hardship, unfamiliar folk here become poor from exactions. In an empty village I see only birds, as the sun sets I meet no one. Pacing the ravine, the wind blows on my face, looking at pines, the dew drips on me. I turn my white-haired head to distant mountains— there is the yellow dust of a battlefield.

20.57–58

From the Post Station I Go to My Thatched Hut, Then Go Back Again to East Camp

I

In the gorges a traveler returning to his fields, by the river I borrow a horse to ride. It is not looking for Dai Andao, but it does resemble heading to the Xi family pool. Gorges perilous, wind and mist remote, the weather cold, tangerines hang down.

1  *Wang Huizhi. Unlike Wang Huizhi, Du Fu is going on horseback.
2  *Shan Jian.
築場看斂積，
一學楚人為。

II
短景難高臥，
衰年強此身。
山家蒸栗暖，
野飯射麋新。
世路知交薄，
門庭畏客頻。
牧童斯在眼，
田父實為鄰。

20.59
暫往白帝復還東屯
復作歸田去，
猶殘穫稻功。
築場憐穴蟻，
拾穗許村童。
落杵光輝白，
除芒子粒紅。
加餐可扶老，
倉廩慰飄蓬。
Building a threshing floor, I look at the harvest piles, 
8 in all I imitate what Chu people do.

II

Shortening days, hard to rest at ease, 
in my waning years I have to force my body along. 
Mountain homes, steamed chestnuts warm, 
4 wilderness meal, shot venison fresh. 
Ways of the age, friends and acquaintances casual, 
gate and yard, I dread frequent visitors. 
Herbboys, such are before my eyes, 
8 farmers are truly my neighbors.

20.59

Returning to East Camp After Going to White Emperor Castle For a While

Again I go off back to my fields, 
harvesting the rice still remains to be done. 
Building the threshing floor, I pity ants in their holes, 
4 I permit a village lad to glean the fallen ears. 
The light gleams white where the pestle falls, 
getting rid of the husks, the grains are red. 
Eating more can support my old age, 
8 the granary comforts this wind-tossed dandelion puff.
茅堂椅校收稻二首

I

香稻三秋末，
平田百頃間。
喜無多屋宇，
幸不礙雲山。
御裌侵寒氣，
嘗新破旅顏。
紅鮮終日有，
玉粒未吾恥。

II

稻米炊能白，
秋葵煮復新。
誰云滑易飽，
老藉軟俱勻。
種幸房州熟，
苗同伊闕春。
無勞映渠碗，
自有色如銀。
At My Thatched Hall Overseeing the Harvest of Rice

I

Fragrant rice at the end of autumn’s last month,
level field of a hundred acres.
I rejoice that there are not many buildings,
lucky not to have the cloudy mountains blocked from view.
Even wearing lined clothes, cold air gets in,
tasting the new makes the sojourner’s face smile.
I have it red and fresh all day through,
nor am I stingy with the white-jade grains.

II

Rice grains, cooked, can become white,
autumn mallows, boiled, are also fresh.
Who says that mallows’ slipperiness makes one easily full?—
old, I depend on the rice being equally soft.
In planting, lucky to have the “Fangzhou ripeners,”¹
the sprouts were the same as “Yique spring.”²
Don’t bother to let it shine in an alabaster bowl—
its own color is like silver.

¹ Fangzhou is in modern Hunan; this seems to be a southern strain of rice.
² Yique is south of Luoyang; this seems to be another strain of rice.
20.62

刈稻了詠懷

稻穫空雲水，
川平對石門。
寒風疏草木，
旭日散雞豚。

野哭初聞戰，
樵歌稍出村。
無家問消息，
作客信乾坤。

20.63–65

季秋蘇五弟繆江樓夜宴崔十三評事韋少府侄三首

I

峽險江驚急，
樓高月迥明。
一時今夕會，
萬里故鄉情。

星落黃姑渚，
秋辭白帝城。
20.62

Singing My Feelings on Finishing Cutting the Rice

Rice harvested, the clouds and waters are left bare,
the level stream faces Stonegate.
Cold winds strip the plants and trees,
4 in the dawn sun chickens and pigs scatter.
Weeping in wilderness, I first hear of a battle,
wood-gatherers’ songs gradually emerge from the village.
I have no family about whom to ask of news,
8 as a wayfarer, I trust myself to Earth and Heaven.

20.63–65

The End of Autumn, My Cousin Su (5) Ying Feasts My Nephews
Case Reviewer Cui (13) and Sherriff Wei at His Mansion by the River by Night

I

Gorges perilous, the river runs swift,
the upper storey high, the moon remote and bright.
Gathering at the same moment this evening,
4 feelings for home thousands of leagues away.
Stars set, the isle of the Yellow Maid,¹
autumn takes leave of White Emperor Castle.

¹ A constellation.
老人因酒病，
坚坐看君倾。

II
对月那无酒，
登楼况有江。
听歌惊白鬓，
笑舞拓秋窗。
尊蚁添相续，
沙鸥并一双。
尽怜君醉倒，
更觉片心降。

III
明月生长好，
浮云薄渐遮。
悠悠照边塞，
悄悄忆京华。
清动杯中物，
高随海上查。
不眠瞻白兔，
百过落乌纱。
This old man, because drinking makes me ill,
just sits here long, watching you quaff your ale.

II [in some versions the third]

Facing the moon how can one lack ale?—
even more climbing an upper storey with the river.
Listening to songs alarms my white locks,
smiling at the dancers, I push open the autumn window.
Lees in the cup added continuously,
gulls on the sand, a pair together.
I am touched by how you all fall over drunk,
and I feel this heart calmed even more.

III [in some versions the second]

The bright moon is fine as it grows,
drifting clouds, filmy, gradually cover it.
Far off it shines on this frontier
where I sadly recall the capital.
Clear, it stirs on “that thing in the cup,”
high, it follows the raft at sea.
Not sleeping, I peer at the white Hare,
a hundred times it has passed by my black gauze cap.

---

1 Ale.
2 *Riding the raft.
3 The Hare in the moon.
4 The cap of a recluse.
20.66

戲寄崔評事表侄、蘇五表弟、韋大少府諸侄

隱豹深愁雨，
潛龍故起雲。
泥多仍徑曲，
心醉阻賢群。
忍待江山麗，
還披鮑謝文。
高樓憶疏谿，
秋興坐氛氳。

20.67

季秋江村

喬木村墟古，
疏籬野蔓懸。
素琴將暇日，
白首望霜天。
登俎黃柑重，
支床錦石圓。
遠遊雖寂寞，
難見此山川。
20.66

Playfully Sent to My Nephew Case Reviewer Cui, to My Cousin Su (5), and to My Nephew Sheriff Wei Senior

The hidden leopard deeply worries over the rain,¹
the sunken dragon itself gives rise to clouds.²
There is much mud all along the path’s bends,
the heart is drunk at being blocked from you worthy men.
I’ll bear with it until river and mountains are lovely,
again I spread your writings like Bao and Xie before me.
I recall the expansiveness of the high upper storey,
with autumn elation sitting in the generative vapors.

20.67

Late Autumn in a River Village

The tall trees, the hamlet ancient,
sparse hedges where wild vines hang.
A plain zither to accompany leisure days,
white hair gazing into frosty skies.
Yellow oranges heavy, put on the platter,
variegated stones round, supporting my couch.
Although far travels are sad and lonely,
it's hard to see such mountains and rivers.

¹ When it is rainy for seven days, the leopard does not come down to hunt, but lets its pelt get moist to cultivate its “patterns” (also “literary works”).
² The leopard, “in reclusion,” may refer to Du Fu himself, while the dragon, a figure for “rising high,” may refer to his addressees. The couplet also refers to the rainy weather that keeps Du Fu at home.
20.68

小園

由來巫峽水，
本自楚人家。
客病留因藥，
春深買為花。
秋庭風落果，
瀼岸雨潰沙。
問俗營寒事，
將詩待物華。

20.69

寒雨朝行視園樹

柴門雜樹向千株，
丹橘黃柑此地無。
江上今朝寒雨歇，
籬中秀色畫屏紆。
桃蹊李徑年雖故，
栀子紅椒豔復殊。
鎖石藤梢元自落，
倚天松骨見春枯。
20.68

Little Garden

Always have the waters of the Wu Gorges
originally been the home of Chu people.
The sojourner sick, I stayed for its medicinal herbs,
when spring was deep, I bought it because of flowers.
In my autumn yard the wind brings down fruit,
on the river inlet shore, the rain made the sand collapse.
I find out about local ways to deal with winter,
and with poems I await the year’s flowering.

20.69

Walking at Dawn After a Cold Rain, Looking at the Trees in My Garden

The various trees by my ramshackle gate approach a thousand,
yet here is wanting the red tangerine and the yellow orange.
This dawn by the river the cold rain has stopped,
the splendid colors through my hedge are a painted screen winding around.
Paths to peach and plum tree, though they be old in years,
the gardenias and red pepper tree are sensuous and remarkable.
The wisteria vines that lock the stones have already shed their leaves,
the skeletal pine against the skies now is withered.
林香出實垂將盡，
葉蒂辭枝不重蘇。
愛日恩光蒙借貸，
清霜殺氣得憂虞。
哀顏動覓藜床坐，
緩步仍須竹杖扶。
散騎未知雲閣處，
啼猿僻在楚山隅。

20.70

傷秋

村僻來人少，
山長去鳥微。
高秋收畫扇，
久客掩荊扉。
懶慢頭時櫛，
艱難帶減圍。
將軍猶汗馬，
天子尚戎衣。
白蔣風飄脆，
殷檉曉夜稀。
何年減豺虎，
似有故園歸。
The scent of the woods comes from fruit, they have almost all fallen, leaves and stems depart the branches to recover no more. I love the sun’s gracious light, I receive it on loan, in the clear frost and deadly atmosphere I find grief and worry. My aging face always seeks my wickerwork couch to sit, my slow steps still require a bamboo cane’s support. This cavalry attendant does not know where the tower to the clouds is,¹ the crying gibbons are remote in a corner of Chu mountains.

20.70

Grieving Over Autumn

The village, out of the way, people come rarely, the mountains stretch long, departing birds grow faint. I put away my painted fan in autumn, long a sojourner, I shut my wicker gate. Lazy, I sometimes comb my hair, the girth of my sash shrinks from hardships. The generals, still on sweating steeds, the Son of Heaven, yet in uniform. Winds have whipped the white wild rice frail, dawn to dusk crimson tamarisks grow sparser. When someday the jackals and tigers diminish, it seems I will return to the garden of home.

¹ Du Fu figures himself as Pan Yue in the preface to “The Poetic Exposition on Being Stirred by Autumn.” The “tower to the clouds” is the palace where Pan Yue was staying overnight in attendance.
20.71
即事

天畔群山孤草亭，
江中风浪雨冥冥。
一雙白魚不受釣，
三寸黃柑猶自青。
多病馬卿無日起，
窮途阮籍幾時醒。
未聞細柳散金甲，
腸斷秦川流濁涇。

20.72
耳聋

生年鶡冠子，
歎世鹿皮翁。
眼復幾時暗，
耳從前月聾。
猿鳴秋淚缺，
雀噪晚愁空。
黃落驚山樹，
呼兒問朔風。
20.71

Describing How It Is

A host of mountains on the horizon, a lone thatched pavilion, on the river are wind and waves, the rain making things dark. A single pair of whitefish will not swallow the hook, 4 a three-inch yellow orange still too green. Sima Xiangru is very sick, he never gets up,¹ Ruan Ji at the end of his road, when will he sober up?² I have not heard that at Thinwillow Camp the armor is put away,³ it breaks my heart how of the rivers of Qin there flows the muddy Jing.

20.72

Getting Deaf

Still alive, a Master Pheasant Cap,⁴ the Old Man in Deerhide sighs for the age.⁵ I don't know when my eyesight will dim, 4 but my ears began to grow deaf last month. When gibbons cry, my tears for autumn are missing,⁶ sparrows chatter, but my evening sorrow is gone. I'm startled by mountain trees when their yellow falls 8 and call to my boy to ask about the north wind.

¹ Sima Xiangru.
² Ruan Ji.
³ Where General Zhou Yafu camped in the Western Han to protect the capital against the Xiongnu.
⁴ A famous Chu recluse during the Spring and Autumn Annals period.
⁵ An immortal.
⁶ To shed tears at the third cry of the gibbons in the Wu Gorges was proverbial—but only if one can hear them.
20.73–74

獨坐二首

I

竟日雨冥冥，
雙崖洗更青。
水花寒落岸，
山鳥暮過庭。
暖老須燕玉，
充饑憶楚萍。
胡笳在樓上，
哀怨不堪聽。

II

白狗斜臨北，
黃牛更在東。
峽雲常照夜，
江日會兼風。
曬藥安垂老，
應門試小童。
亦知行不逮，
苦恨耳多聾。
Sitting Alone

20.73–74

Sitting Alone

I

All day long the rains darkened,
the two slopes were washed even greener.
Flowers in the water fell from the shore in the cold,
4 mountain birds at twilight pass my yard.
I need a jade of Yan to warm my old age,1
to satisfy my hunger I recall Chu duckweed.2
Hu pipes high in the tower—
8 I cannot bear to listen to their mournful rancor.

II

White Dog slants, looking out on the north,
Yellow Ox is farther on in the east.3
The clouds of these gorges always shine by night,
4 sunlight on the river may chance to join with wind.
Sun-drying medicinal herbs secures approaching old age,
to answer the gate I try to use my young servant boy.
I know that I can’t make it walking
8 and bitterly resent that my ears are quite deaf.

---

1 A beautiful woman.
2 From a story in the Kongzi jiayu. The King of Chu crossed the river and found something that was round, red, and big as a dipper. Not knowing what it was, he sent to Lu to ask Confucius. Confucius said that this was the duckweed fruit, that it could be peeled and eaten, and that it was a lucky omen.
3 The names of two of the Yangzi gorges.
雲

雲以瞿唐會，
江依白帝深。
終年常起峽，
每夜必通林。
收穫辭霜渚，
分明在夕岑。
高齋非一處，
秀氣豁煩襟。

20.76

大曆二年九月三十日

為客無時了，
悲秋向夕終。
瘴餘夔子國，
霜薄楚王宮。
草敵虛嵐翠，
花禁冷葉紅。
年年小搖落，
不與故園同。
20.75

Clouds

Dragons congregate in the Qutang Gorge,¹
the river by White Emperor is deep.
All year long clouds always rise in the gorges,
every night they pass through the forests.
When the harvest is gathered, they leave frosty isles,
clearly seen, they are there on evening ridges.
In high studios, in more than one place alone,
their splendid atmosphere relieves troubled hearts.

20.76

Ninth Month, Thirtieth Day of the Second Year of the Dali Reign

Never do I cease being a sojourner,
I grieve that autumn will end this evening.
Remnants of miasma, the land of Kui,
frost lies thin on the Chu king’s palace.
Plants rival the azure of the formless mountain haze,
flowers forbid that cold leaves be red.
Every year, a small shedding of leaves,
not the same as in my gardens at home.

¹ Clouds accompany dragons.
20.77

十月一日

有瘴非全歇，
為冬亦不難。
夜郎溪日暖，
白帝峽風寒。
4 蒸裹如千室，
焦糟幸一盤。
茲辰南國重，
8 舊俗自相歡。

20.78

孟冬

殊俗還多事，
方冬變所為。
破甘霜落爪，
4 善稻雪翻匙。
巫岫寒都薄，
烏蠻瘴遠隨。
6 終然减灘瀨，
8 暫喜息蛟螭。
20.77

The First Day of the Tenth Month

There is miasma, it hasn’t entirely stopped, it won’t be hard to get through the winter. At Yelang the sun is warm on the creeks, at White Emperor Castle the gorge winds are cold. Steamed dumplings, it seems in a thousand homes, fortunately, a plateful of dried mash. The southern lands see this as an important day by old custom they make merry together.

20.78

First Month of Winter

Strange ways here, still much to be done, now that it’s winter, my activities change. Breaking open an orange, a frost falls on my nails, tasting rice, snow spills over my spoon. On the Wu ridges the cold is faint everywhere, from the far Black Mon, miasma comes. At last the waters diminish over the rapids, and for a while I rejoice at dragons’ repose.
20.79

雷

巫峽中宵動，
滄江十月雷。
龍蛇不成蟄，
天地劃爭迴。
卻碾空山過，
深蟠絕壁來。
何須妒雲雨，
霹靂楚王臺。

20.80

悶

瘴癘浮三蜀，
風雲暗百蠻。
捲篋唯白水，
隱几亦青山。
猿捷長難見，
鷗輕故不還。
無錢從滯客，
有鏡巧催顏。
20.79

Thunder

In the Wu gorges it stirs at midnight, the gray river, tenth month thunder. Dragons and serpents can’t hibernate, in an instant Heaven and Earth turn around.¹ It still crushes passing through deserted mountains, deeply coiling, it comes from sheer cliffs. Why need it be jealous of “clouds and rain” with a crashing peal on the Chu king’s terrace?²

20.80

Gloomy

A pestilence drifts over Shu’s three regions, wind and clouds darken the land of the Mon. I roll up the curtain, only white water, leaning on my armrest, also green mountains. Gibbons nimble, always hard to see, gulls light, still they have not returned. With no money, let me linger as a sojourner, I have a mirror, adept at hastening old age.

---

¹ Because thunder is characteristic of summer.
² The “clouds and rain” refer to the goddess of Wu Mountain, who came to the bed of the king of Chu in dream.
夜二首

I

白夜月休弦，
燈花半委眠。
號山無定鹿，
落樹有驚蟬。
暫憶江東鱠，
兼懷雪下船。
蠻歌犯星起，
空覺在天邊。

II

城郭悲笳暮，
村墟過翼稀。
甲兵年數久，
賦斂夜深歸。
暗樹依巖落，
明河繞塞微。
斗斜人更望，
月細鵲休飛。


I

White night, the new moon ends its crescent
with the lamp sparks half scattered, I sleep.
Calling out in the mountains, deer from no fixed place,
from leafless trees there are cicadas startled awake.
For a moment I recall Jiangdong sashimi,¹
I also think of that boat in the snow.²
Mon songs rise up into starlight,
and I helplessly realize that I am at earth’s end.

II

An evening of sad fifes from the city,
in the hamlets passing wings are few.
Warfare has long come often through the years,
tax collectors return only deep in the night.
Trees in darkness shed leaves on the cliffs,
the bright river of stars, faint arcing over the frontier.
The Dipper slants, the person keeps gazing,
the moon is thin, the magpies stop their flight.³

---

¹ *Zhang Han.
² *Wang Huizhi.
³ This echoes Cao Cao’s famous “Short Song,” with the lines: “The moon is bright, the stars are sparse, / the magpies are flying south. / They circle the tree three times around, / on what branch can they rest?” The association is with finding refuge.
朝二首

I

清旭楚宮南，
霜空萬嶺含。
野人時獨往，
雲木曉相參。
俊鶻無聲過，
饑烏下食貪。
病身終不動，
搖落任江潭。

II

浦帆晨初發，
郊扉冷未開。
村疏黃葉墜，
野靜白鷗來。
礎潤休全濕，
雲晴欲半回。
巫山冬可怪，
昨夜有奔雷。
20.83–84

Dawn

I

Clear dawn sun south of the Chu palace,
frosty sky containing ten thousand peaks.
A man of the wilds at times goes off on his own,
in the morning clouds and trees mix together.
A doughty hawk passes soundlessly,
a starving crow descends to eat greedily.
This sick body will never stir,
let the leaves fall again in pools of the river.

II

A sail on the shore first sets out in morning,
door in the meadow, not yet open because of the cold.
The village foliage is sparse, yellow leaves tumble,
the wilds are calm, a white gull comes.
The pedestal is moist, no longer entirely wet,
the clouds in clear sky, about to half turn back.
Wu Mountain is strange in winter,
last night there were peals of thunder.
20.85–86

戲作俳諧體遣悶二首

I

異俗吁可怪，
斯人難並居。
家家養烏鬼，
4 頓頓食黃魚。
舊識難為態，
新知已暗疏。
治生且耕鑿，
8 只有不關渠。

II

西歷青羌坂，
南留白帝城。
於菟侵客恨，
4 矜妝作人情。
瓦卜傳神語，
畬田費火耕。
是非何處定，
8 高枕笑浮生。
20.85–86
Playfully Composed, Jests to Banish Melancholy

I

I find the strange ways here weird indeed,
it’s hard to live together with such people as these.
Every household raises cormorants,
at every meal they eat sturgeon.
They can’t be polite to old acquaintances,
they are secretive and keep aloof from those newly met.
For my livelihood I just plow and dig a well for the while,
all I can do is to have nothing to do with them.

II

To the west I traversed the slopes of the Blue Qiang folk,
in the south I stay by White Emperor Castle.¹
Tigers have joined the things I hate as a traveler,
fried crullers are what folk here give on visits.
Tile divinations transmit the words of gods,
slash and burn fields involve fire and plowing.
How can one decide if this is good or bad?—
resting above it all, I laugh at this life adrift.

¹ Du Fu’s note: “In recent years I fared from Qin to Long, then from Tonggu county
I went off to travel in Shu, and now I am lingering by Mount Wu” 頃歲自秦涉隴，從同谷縣去遊蜀，留滯於巫山.
昔游

昔謁華蓋君，
深求洞宮腳。
玉棺已上天，
白日亦寂寞。
暮升艮岑頂，
巾几猶未卻。
弟子四五人，
入來淚俱落。
余時遊名山，
發軔在遠壑。
良覿違夙願，
含淒向寥廓。
林昏罷幽磬，
竟夜伏石閣。
王喬下天壇，
微月映皓鶴。
晨溪嚮虛駛，
歸徑行已昨。
豈辭青鞋胝，
悵望金匕藥。
My Travels of Old

20.87

Of old I paid respects to the Master of the Flowery Parasol, I sought the spot of his cave grotto deep within. The jade coffin had risen to Heaven,¹ even in broad daylight it was gloomy and still. At twilight I ascended the summit of the northeastern pinnacle, his kerchief and table still had not been removed. He had four or five disciples, when I entered, they all shed tears.

³ Qiao the Prince descended to Heaven’s Altar, faint moonlight caught his hoary crane. The morning creek sped toward the void, my returning path was already that of the day before. How could I refuse blisters in my green shoes?— in despair I hoped for the herb in the golden spoon.⁴

---

¹ According to legend, a jade coffin descended from Heaven and carried Wangzi Qiao off.
² To “remove one’s wheelblock” is to set out.
³ The principal peak of Wangwu Mountain.
⁴ An elixir of immortality.
東蒙赴舊隱，
尚憶同志樂。
休事董先生，
於今獨萧索。
胡為客關塞，
道意久衰薄。
妻子亦何人，
丹砂負前諾。  
雖悲髮變鬒，
未憂筋力弱。
扶藜望清秋，
有興入廬霍。

20.88–91

雨四首

1

微雨不滑道，
斷雲疏復行。
白鳥去邊明。
秋日新霑影，
寒江舊落聲。
I went off to the former place of reclusion at eastern Meng Mountain, I still recall my joys with those of like mind. Since I stopped serving Master Dong, it has been dreary isolation to this day. Why am I a sojourner on the frontiers? my interests in the Way have long faded. What do wife and children so matter to me that I have betrayed my former vow for the cinnabar pill? Though I grieve at the change of my thick, black hair, I do not yet worry about sinew’s strength weakening. Supported by my cane, I gaze off in clear autumn, I have the inclination to go to Mounts Lu and Huo.

20.88–91

Rain

I

A faint rain does not make the way slippery, broken clouds grow sparse, then move again. Purple slopes blacken where they speed, white birds brighter, leaving their edges. The autumn sun newly soaks its beams, cold river, the sound of formerly fallen rain.

1 Evidently a Daoist Master whom Du Fu served.
柴扉临野碓，
半湿捣香粳。

II
江雨旧无时，
天晴忽散丝。
暮秋霑物冷，
今日过云迟。
上马回休出，
看鸥坐不辞。
高轩当濛濒，
润色静书帷。

III
物色岁将晏，
天隅人未归。
朔风鸣淅淅，
寒雨下霏霏。
多病久加饭，
衰容新授衣。
时危觉凋丧，
故旧短书稀。
My ramshackle door looks out on a wilderness millstone,
8 they pound the fragrant rice, half wet.

II

As ever rain on the river is unpredictable,
strands suddenly spread in sunny skies.
In late autumn soaked things are cold,
4 today the passing clouds delay.
   I get on my horse, turn back, and don’t go out,
   I sit and won’t quit watching the gulls.
My high porch faces Yanyu Rock,
8 its wet appearance calms my library curtain.

III

From the look of things the year is soon to end,
and I still have not returned from the far horizon.
The north wind resounds whistling,
4 cold rains descend in a blur.
   Often sick, I have long eaten more,
   a wasted appearance, newly made winter clothes.
The times perilous, I am aware of deaths,
8 short letters from old friends grow few.
IV

楚雨石苔滋，
京華消息遲。
山寒青兕叫，
江晚白鷗饑。

神女花錦落，
蛟人織杼悲。
繁憂不自整，
終日灑如絲。

20.92

大覺高僧蘭若

巫山不見廬山遠，
松林蘭若秋風晚。
一老猶鳴日暮鐘，
諸僧尚乞齋時飯。

香爐峰色隱晴湖，
種杏仙家近白榆。
飛錫去年啼邑子，
獻花何日許門徒。
IV

The moss on rocks flourishes in Chu rains, news from the capital is delayed.
The mountains cold, the blue rhino bellows, the river late in the day, white gulls hungry. Flowery hairpins fall from the goddess,¹ mermen's weaving shuttles grieve. A bounty of worries I cannot get straight, all day long they spread like the strands of rain.

20.92

The Chapel of the Lofty Monk Dajue²

At Mount Wu we no longer see our Huiyuan of Mount Lu,³ chapel in a grove of pines, autumn winds late in the day. One old man still rings the bell at sunset, all the other monks are still begging for food for vegetarian meals. The color of Incense Burner Peak, shadows the sunlit lake,⁴ the immortal's home planted with apricots is near the white elm in the stars.⁵ The year his flying staff went away his fellow townsmen were left to weep, when will presenting flowers be permitted to his followers?⁶

---

1 "The goddess of Wu Mountain who comes as the evening rain.
2 Original note: “Last winter the monk went to Hu’nan”和尚去冬往湖南.
3 The famous monk of the Eastern Jin, who founded the temple complex on Mount Lu.
4 Incense Burner Peak is part of Mount Lu.
5 Dong Feng lived on Lu Mountain and cured sickness. He took no money, but asked those patients whose illness was cured to plant apricot trees according to the severity of their illness. Soon he had a whole grove. The White Elm was a constellation; the phrasing here suggests how high the place was.
6 “Presenting flowers” here refers to caring for the old monk.
20.93

謁真諦寺禪師

蘭若山高處，
煙霞嶂幾重。
凍泉依細石，
晴雪落長松。
問法看詩妄，
觀身向酒慵。
未能割妻子，
卜宅近前峰。

20.94

上卿翁請修武侯廟，遺像缺落，時崔卿權夔州

大賢為政即多聞，
刺史真符不必分。
尚有西郊諸葛廟，
臥龍無首對江濱。
20.93
Paying a Visit to the Chan Master of Zhendi Temple

The chapel is on a high spot on the mountain, among mists and auroras, several layers of cliffs. Frozen streams lie along small rocks, sunlit snow falls from tall pines. Asking of the Dharma, I am deluded in attending to poetry; reflecting on my person, I’m lazy even with ale. I cannot yet renounce my wife and children and site a cottage near the peak ahead.

20.94
Presented to Old Qing Requesting Him to Repair the Shrine of the Martial Count, Whose Statue Is Falling Apart; at the Time Cui Qing Held Power in Kuizhou

When a man of great virtue governs, he is widely known at once, a proper appointment as governor need not have a split tally. Still there is in the western suburbs the shrine of Zhuge Liang, headless, the “Sleeping Dragon” faces the river’s edge.

---

1 This refers to the Han practice of splitting a tally for a prefectural appointment, one half remaining in the capital and the other half taken by the governor.
2 *Zhuge Liang was known as “Sleeping Dragon.”
20.95

奉送卿二翁統節度鎮軍還江陵

火旗還錦纜，
白馬出江城。
嘹唳吟笳發，

蕭條別浦清。
寒空巫峽曙，
落日渭陽明。
留滯嗟衰疾，

何時見息兵。

20.96

久雨期王將軍不至

天雨蕭蕭滯茅屋，
空山無以慰幽獨。
銳頭將軍來何遲，

令我心中苦不足。
數看黃霧亂玄雲，
時聽嚴風折喬木。
泉源泠泠雜猿狖，

泥濘漠漠飢鴻鵠。
20.95

Respectfully Sending Old Qing (2) On His Return to Jiangling After Temporarily Acting As Commissioner in Charge of the Army

The fire banner along with brocade cables,¹
a white horse comes forth from this river city.²
Shrilling, the reed pipes sound forth,
gloomy, the shore of parting is clear.
Cold sky, morning in the Wu Gorges,
setting sun, the Wei’s north bank bright.³
Left behind, I sigh for my aging and sickliness,
when will we see the end of arms?

20.96

Long Rains, Expecting General Wang, Who Does Not Come

The heavens whistle with rain, I tarry in my thatched cottage,
in the deserted mountains there is nothing to console my isolation.
The pointy-headed general, how late he is to come!⁴
Often I watched the yellow fog tangled with black clouds,
at times I listened to harsh winds snap the tall trees.
Springs and streams purled mixed with cries of gibbons and apes,
muck and mud spread far and wide, a famished swan.

¹ The “fire banner” is a red banner. The “brocade cables” are synecdoche for the boat on which Cui Qing is leaving.
² The white horse stands for a general, here Cui Qing.
³ From the Classic of Poetry the “Wei’s north bank,” refers to the site of sending off a maternal uncle.
⁴ The “pointy-headed general” is a reference to Bai Qi, the great general of Qin.
歲暮窮陰耿未已，
人生會面難再得。
憶爾腰下鐵絲箭，
射殺林中雪色鹿。

前者坐皮因問毛，
知子歷險人馬勞。
異獸如飛星宿落，
應弦不礙蒼山高。
安得突騎只五千，
崒然眉骨皆爾曹。
走平亂世相催促，
一豁明主正鬱陶。
憶昔范增碎玉斗，
未使吳兵著白袍。
昏昏閶闔閉氛祲，
十月荊南雷怒號。

虎牙行

秋風欻吸吹南國，
天地慘慘無顏色。
321

Ballad of Tigertooth

The utter darkness of year’s end is clearly not yet done,
in human life chances to meet are hard to find again.
I recall that the iron-stringed arrows hanging at your waist
shot and killed a snow-colored deer in the woods.

Earlier I sat on its skin and asked about the pelt,
I know that you went through dangers, that man and horse both
struggled.
This strange creature was as if flying, fast as a shooting star,
responding to the shot, it was not shielded by the height of the gray
mountain.1
How can we get hussars that can charge, just five thousand,
brows and bones outstanding, all of your sort.
They could gallop this troubled age to peace, urging each other on,
once and for all relieve our ruler, now brooding in such worry.
I think back on how long ago Fan Zeng shattered the ladle of jade,2
he has not had the troops of Wu wear white gowns.3
Murky are the imperial gates, closed within by ominous vapors,
in the tenth month in Jingnan the thunder cries out in rage.

20.97

Ballad of Tigertooth4

The autumn wind in a whish blows on the southern domains,
Heaven and Earth are dreary and lack all color.

1 This is the attribute of the master archer, whose target collapses on hearing the
twang of the bowstring.
2 Done in frustration when Xiang Yu did not permit him to kill Liu Bang, later to
found the Han dynasty, when he came to the feast at Hongmen.
3 Gowns worn by the soldiers under the command of the successful sixth-century
general Chen Qingzhi.
4 Original Note: “Tigertooth Mountain is north of Jingmen, where the river’s waters
run deep and fast” 虎牙在荊門之北，江水峻急.
洞庭揚波江漢迥，

虎牙銅柱皆傾側。

巫峽陰岑朔漠氣，
峰巒窈窕谿谷黑。

杜鵑不來猿狖寒，

山鬼幽憂雪霜逼。

楚老長嗟憶炎瘴，
三尺角弓兩斛力。

壁立石城橫塞起，

金錯旌竿滿雲直。

漁陽突騎獵青丘，
犬戎鎖甲聞丹極。

八荒十年防盜賊，

征戍誅求寡妻哭，
遠客中宵淚霑臆。

20.98

錦樹行

今日苦短昨日休，
歲云暮矣增離憂。
霜凋碧樹行錦樹，

萬壑東逝無停留。
Waves rise on Lake Dongting, Yangzi and Han swirl,
Tigertooth and Bronze Column both lean over.  
The Wu Gorge's shadowy summits have northern desert atmosphere,
peaks and ridges hidden away, stream gulches and valleys black.
The cuckoo does not come, apes and gibbons are cold,
the mountain wraith secluded in misery, hard-pressed by frost and snow.
Old men of Chu give long sighs recalling miasmal heat,
a horn bow three feet long needs two stones of weight to pull.
On the cliff stands a stone castle, rising athwart the frontier,
flag-staffs with golden inlay rise straight up filling the clouds.
The cataphracts from Yuyang bagged Green Hill as their game,
the chain mail of the Dog Rong was heard at the red ridgepole.
A decade in the encircling wastes defending against marauders,
far garrisons and tax demands, widowed wives weep,
a far traveler at midnight soaks his chest with tears.

20.98
Ballad of Brocade Trees
This day is terribly short, yesterday is done,
the year is drawing to a close adding care about being away from home.
The frost has carved the emerald trees making them trees of brocade,
ten thousand ravines go off eastward never pausing or lingering.

---
1 Bronze Column is the name of a rapids.
2 The "shadowy" part of the mountain is the north face, exposed to the winds from the north.
3 Yuyang was An Lushan's command. Green Hill was an isle of the immortals, here referring to the capital.
4 The Dog Rong was the anachronistic term for the Tibetans. The "red ridgepole" is synecdoche for the palace.
荒戍之城石色古，
东郭老人住青丘。
飞书白帝营斗粟，
琴瑟几杖柴门幽。
青草萋萋尽枯死，
天马跛足随犛牛。
自古圣贤多薄命，
姦雄恶少皆封侯。
故国三年一消息，
终南渭水寒悠悠。
五陵豪贵反颠倒，
乡里小儒狐白裘。

生男堕地要膂力，
一生富贵倾家国。
莫愁父母少黄金，
天下风尘儿亦得。

自平
自平宫中吕太一，
收珠南海千余日。
The castle that garrisons this wilderness is ancient, the color of the stone, an old man of the town to the east lives on Green Hill. Letters sent flying to White Emperor Castle arrange a measure of grain, with zither, armrest, and staff my ramshackle gate is secluded. The green plants have grown sere, all have withered and died, the horse of Heaven is lame of foot, he goes along with water buffalo. Sages and wise men from ancient days often had ill fates, wicked bullies and evil youths are all enfeoffed as counts. In three years, from my homeland news comes only once, Mount Zhongnan and the Wei’s waters go on and on in the cold. The nobles and grandees of Wuling have been overturned, little boys of the villages wear white furs of fox.

A manchild born upon the earth requires strength of backbone, a lifetime of wealth and high degree topples homeland and hearth. Do not worry if your father and mother have but little gold, with war’s dust all over the world even their child can obtain it.

20.99

Since They Put Down

Since they put down the palace eunuch Lü Taiyi,¹ pearls have been gathered from the South Sea for more than a thousand days.

---

¹ A eunuch commissioner who rebelled in 763 in the far south.
寄裴施州

近供生犀翡翠稀，
复恐征戍干戈密。

蠻溪豪族小動搖，
世封刺史非時朝。
蓬萊殿前諸主將，
才如伏波不得驕。

20.100

寄裴施州

廊廟之具裴施州，
宿昔一逢無此流。
金鐘大鏞在東序，
冰壺玉衡懸清秋。

自從相遇減多病，
三歲為客寬邊愁。
堯有四嶽明至理，
漢二千石真分憂。

幾度寄書白鹽北，
苦寒贈我青羔裘。
霜雪回光避錦袖，
龍蛇動箋蟠銀鉤。
Recently they’ve provided living rhinos and kingfisher feathers only rarely. and again I worry that campaigns and the clash of arms will be thick.

The chieftan clans of the Creek Mon have made minor commotion, for generations they were enfeoffed as prefects, and did not come to court at set times.

To all those top generals before Penglai Palace: though with talent like the “Wave-Queller” they should not act with arrogance.

20.100

To Pei of Shizhou

Complement for the halls of state, Pei of Shizhou,
I met him once long ago, there are no others of this man’s class.
He is the metal bell and great gong in the Eastern Position,
the Pot of Ice, the Jade Yoke, hung in clear autumn.

Ever since I encountered you my frequent illness has lessened, after three years here as a sojourner my frontier worries relax.
Yao had lords of the Four Marchmounts for brilliantly perfect governance,
Han’s two-thousand-catty prefects truly shared the king’s cares.
How many times have you sent letters here north of White Salt Cliff?— lest I suffer from cold, you gave me a dark lambs-wool cape.
Frost and snow turn back their light, retreating from brocade sleeves, serpents and dragons stir in the box, silver hooks coil.

---

1 In late autumn of 767 the Liao people sacked Guizhou.
2 The old policy from Taizong’s time was to make the tribal chieftans of the Southwest governors and not require them to present regular tribute.
3 The Eastern Han general Ma Yuan, who successfully campaigned in the far south.
4 According to legend this was the Academy in the Xia dynasty.
5 A jade pot filled with ice was a standard image of purity and became a kenning for the moon. The Jade Yoke was a constellation.
6 Two thousand catties of grain was a governor’s salary in the Han.
7 Praising the coat.
8 Praising Pei’s calligraphy in the letter.
紫衣使者辞复命，
再拜故人谢佳政。
将老已失子孙忧，
後來況接才華盛。

20.101

鄭典設自施州歸

吾憐滎陽秀，
冒暑初有適。名賢慎出處，
不肯妄行役。旅茲殊俗遠，
竟以屢空迫。南謁裴施州，
氣合無險僻。攀援懸根木，
登頓入天石。青山自一川，
城郭洗憂戚。聽子話此邦，
令我心悅懷。其俗則純樸，
不知有主客。
Your purple-robed envoy takes his leave to report on his charge,
I pay my respects to my old friend, thankful for your good governance.
Getting old, I have lost worries for children and grandchildren,
afterwards they may even more keep connection with the glory of your talents.

20.101

Zheng of the Household Affairs Service Returns from Shizhou

I am touched by this man, the pride of Xingyang,
who braved summer’s heat when first he set off.
This famous worthy is cautious in serving or retiring,
he wouldn’t set out on a journey rashly.
You fared far there, where the ways are strange,
at last you were forced by constant want.
In the south you paid respects to Pei of Shizhou,
when tempers agree, there is no regard of perils and remoteness.
You clambered up, clasping trees with roots hanging in air,
you climbed and rested on rocks entering heaven.
Green mountain, then naturally a river,
the city there swept away all grief and care.
When I listen to you tell of this land,
it makes my heart feel joyous.
Their customs are simple and pure,
they do not recognize stranger and host.
溫溫諸侯門，
禮亦如古昔。
敕廚倍常羞，
杯盤頗狼藉。
時雖屬喪亂，
事貴賞匹敵。
中宵愜良會，
裴鄭非遠戚。
群書一萬卷，
博涉供務隙。
他日辱銀鈎，
森疏見矛戟。
倒屣喜旋歸，
畫地求所歷。
乃聞風土質，
又重田疇辟。
刺史似寇恂，
列郡宜競借。
北風吹瘴癘，
羸老思散策。
渚拂蒹葭寒，
嶠穿蘿蕐冪。
此身仗兒僕，
高興潛有激。
The lord’s gate there offers warm welcome,
his manners too were like those of olden days.
He decreed to the kitchen to double their usual delicacies,
cups and plates spread in sumptuous disarray.
Though these times involve death and destruction,
this was precious, that each man enjoyed a match.
At midnight you were content with this fine meeting,
Pei and Zheng were not distant kin.
He had a library of ten thousand scrolls
which he widely consulted, providing him in leisure from duties.
On other days he graced me with silver hooks,¹
I saw spears and pikes, dense and sparse.
Sandals on backwards, I rejoice at your return,²
I want you to draw on the ground where you have been.
Then I heard of the plainness of the local ways
and also how they valued clearing fields.
The Governor is like Kou Xun,³
it is fitting that all the commanderies vie to borrow him.
The north wind has blown the miasma away,
this frail old man longs to take a stroll with his cane.
On isles we may brush the cold of reeds,
on rocky spires we may penetrate coverings of hanging moss.
Though this body of mine depends on son or servant,
I am secretly stirred by lofty inspirations.

¹ Calligraphy, here Pei’s letters to the poet.
² ‘The sign of haste because of excitement.
³ Kou Xun was an Eastern Han official who governed He’nei and Yingchuan. Later when Guangwudi visited Yingchuan, the commoners asked if they could have Kou Xun on loan for a year.
觀公孫大娘弟子舞劍器行

孟冬方首路，
強飯取崖壁。
歎爾疲駑駘，
汗溝血不赤。
終然備外飾，
駕馭何所益。
我有平肩輦，
前途猶准的。
翩翩入鳥道，
庶脫蹉跌厄。

大歷二年十月十九日，夔府別駕元持宅，見臨潁李十二娘舞劍器。壯其蔚跂。問其所師，曰：余公孫大娘弟子也。開元五載，余尚童稚，記於郾城觀公孫氏舞劍器渾脫。瀏灊頓挫，獨出冠世。自高頭宜春梨園二伎坊內人，洎外供奉舞者，曉是舞者，聖文神武皇帝初，公孫一人而已。玉貌錦衣，況余白首。今茲弟子，亦匪盛顏。既辨其由來，知波瀾莫二。撫事慷慨，聊為劍器行。
昔者吳人張旭，善草書書帖，數嘗於鄴縣見公孫大娘舞河西劍器，自此草書長進。豪蕩感激，即公孫可知矣。
In early winter I will take to the road
forcing myself to eat to take the way on the cliffs.
I sigh at this weary old nag,
sweat-pits in its legs, not red with blood.
In the end it is complete in outer adornment,
but what good would it be to hitch it up?
I have a palanquin carried on shoulders,
I can still hit the mark on the road ahead.
Winging on I will enter the bird-roads,
I can hope to avoid the disaster of falling.

20.102
On Seeing a Student of Mistress Gongsun Dance the “Sword Dance”

The nineteenth day of the tenth month of the second year of the Dali reign (767) at the residence of Yuan Chi, the subprefect of Kuizhou, I saw Mistress Li of Linying dance the “sword-dance.” I saw a vigor in her dazzling motions. When I asked whom she had had as a teacher, she said, “I am the student of Mistress Gongsun.” In the fifth year of the Kaiyuan reign, I was still a young boy, but I recall having watched Mistress Gongsun dance the “Sword Dance” and the “Astrakhan” at Yancheng. In fluidity and sudden shifts, she alone crowned the age. From the top court performers of the two academies, Yichun and the Pear Garden, down to dancers presented from outside the court, the only one who really understood this dance early in the reign of Our Emperor, Sage in Culture and Divinely Inspired in War (Xuanzong), was Gongsun. Her face like jade and brocade robes—what’s more, I am now white-haired. And now even this student of hers is no longer in the prime of her beauty. Having found out her origins, I recognized that her motions admitted no alternative. Considering

---
1 Despite its name and though it was martial in its energetic movements, the jianqi, or “sword dance,” was often done barehanded or with a scarf, rather than a sword—though a sword was sometimes used.
2 Some texts prefer Kaiyuan 3 開元三載 to Kaiyuan 5. In either case Du Fu would have been very young, but the five- or six-year-old Du Fu of Kaiyuan 5 would more likely have the kind of memories described.
昔有佳人公孫氏，
一舞劍器動四方。
觀者如山色沮喪，
天地為之久低昂。
㸌如羿射九日落，
矯如群帝駕龍翔。
來如雷霆收震怒，
罷如江海凝清光。
絳唇珠袖兩寂寞，
晚有弟子傳芬芳。
臨潁美人在白帝，
妙舞此曲神揚揚。
與余問答既有以，
感時撫事增惋傷。

先帝侍女八千人，
公孫劍器初第一。
五十年間似反掌，
風塵澒洞昏王室。
梨園弟子散如煙，
女樂餘姿映寒日。
these matters, I was deeply moved and made a “Ballad of the Sword Dance.”

Some time ago Zhang Xu of Wu was skilled in calligraphic pages done in draft script.\(^1\) In Ye he often saw Mistress Gongsun dance the Turkestan Sword Dance, and from that point on he made a great advance in his draft script. In bold vehemence and strong stirring Mistress Gongsun can be recognized.\(^2\)

Once there was a fair woman, Gongsun by name, once she danced the sword dance, she stirred the world around. Those who watched were like hills, their color drained away,\(^3\) as Earth and Heaven long rose and fell by her doing. She flared as when Archer Yi shot the nine suns down, soared upward like a host of gods circling with dragon teams. She came like a peal of thunder withdrawing its rumbling rage, then stopped like clear rays fixed on the river and sea. The ruby lips and pearled sleeves both are still and silent now, but late in life she took a student to pass the sweet art on. That beauty of Linying is here at White Emperor Castle, she dances this music with finesse, the spirit lifts. Having had a chance to ask and for her to answer, stirred by the times and reflecting increases my tender pain.

Women who waited on the former emperor were eight thousand, and Gongsun’s sword dance was foremost of them all. A span of fifty years is like the turning of a palm, a vast storm of windblown dust darkened the royal house. Disciples of the Pear Garden have scattered like a mist.\(^4\) here the dancer’s remnant grace shines in a cold winter sun.

---

1. Zhang Xu was one of the most famous masters of draft script in the Tang.
2. That is, in Zhang Xu’s calligraphy, in her own dancing, and even in her disciple.
3. *Ju sang* 沮喪 usually describes loss of spirit; here it seems such a shock is registered in ashen faces.
4. Members of one of the imperial music academies in Xuanzong’s reign.
寫懷二首

金粟堆南木已拱，
瞿唐石城草蕭瑟。
玳筵急管曲復終，
樂極哀來月東出。
老夫不知其所往，
足繭荒山轉愁疾。

20.103–04

寫懷二首

I

勞生共乾坤，
何處異風俗。
冉冉自趨競，
行行見羁束。  
無貴賤不悲，
無富貧亦足。  
萬古一骸骨，
鄰家遞歌哭。  
鄙夫到巫峽，
三歲如轉燭。  
全命甘留滯，
忘情任榮辱。
South of Golden Grain Mound trees are a double handspan in girth,¹ by stone walls on the Qutang Gorge grass rustles in the wind.² The shrill pipes of the splendid feast end their song again, when joy crests, sorrow comes, the moon appears in the east.³ This old man does not know whither he will go—⁴ feet grow calloused in the rough mountains, my sadness ever more intense.

20.103–04
Describing My Cares

I
The burden of life is alike in the world, what place is different in custom? We race ahead bit by bit, but as we go, we get tangled in restraints. Were there no high status, the low-born would not grieve; were there no wealth, the poor man too would be content. A single skeleton for all time, as the neighbors sing and weep in turn. Since I came to the Wu Gorges three years have been like a flickering candle. I willingly linger on here to keep alive, passions forgotten, I accept either glory or shame.

1  This is the tomb of Xuanzong near Chang’an.
2  Kuizhou, with nearby White Emperor Castle, stood at the head of the Qutang Gorge on the Yangzi.
3  The cliche “when joy crests, sorrow comes” 樂極哀來 originally came from the “Song of the Autumn Wind” 秋風辭, attributed to Han Wudi.
4  This is read as Du Fu not knowing where he will go from here on, but it could just as easily be taken to refer to Mistress Li.
朝班及暮齒，
日給還脱粟。
編蓬石城東，
采藥山北谷。

用心霜雪間，
不必條蔓緣。
非闈故安排，
曾是順幽獨。

達士如弦直，
小人似鉤曲。
曲直吾不知，
負暄候樵牧。

II

夜深坐南軒，
明月照我膝。
驚風翻河漢，
梁棟已出日。

群生各一宿，
飛動自儔匹。
吾亦驅其兒，
營營為私實。

天寒行旅稀，
歲暮日月疾。
From days of court ranks to my twilight years
for my daily provision I still have brown rice.
I built a hut east of the stone walls,

and pick herbs in the valley north of the mountain.
I apply myself to this even in frost and snow—
it need not be when branches and vines turn green.
It has nothing to do with purposeful “calm amid change”;

it was following my own secluded solitude.
The perfected gentleman is straight as a bowstring,
the small man is like a bent hook.
Whether bent or straight I do not know—

I sun myself awaiting the woodsmen and herders.

II

Deep at night I sat on my southern porch,
and the bright moon shone on my lap.
A gust of wind blew over the River of Stars,

and the sun already came forth on my roofbeams.
Each of all living things has passed the night,
birds and beasts find their companions and mates.
I too make my son hurry,


to be busy about our private stocks.
The weather is cold, travelers few,
at year’s end the sun and moon hurry.
寫懷二首

榮名忽中人，
世亂如蠟蠱。
古者三皇前，
滿腹志願畢。
胡為有結繩，
陷此膠與漆。
禍首燧人氏，
厲階董狐筆。
君看燈燭張，
轉使飛蛾密。
放神八極外，
俛仰俱蕭瑟。
終然契真如，
得匪金仙術。
Glory and fame ignore the middling man,
the world is in turmoil like lice.
In olden days before the Three Emperors,
when the belly was full, all ambition ceased.
Why was there the knotted cord,¹
that we fell here, stuck in lacquer and glue?
Disaster’s start was with the Kindler;²
the next step to hostility was Dong Hu’s brush.³
Just look when a lamp or candle is lit,
how it makes the moths fly ever denser around.
I let my spirit free beyond the eight limits,
in an instant all is gone in the whistling wind
At last I will tally with Ultimate Reality—
can this not be the arts of the Metal Immortal?⁴

---
¹ The supposed origin of writing.
² The Kindler was a mythical ruler of primordial antiquity who taught the use of fire
and governed by knotting cords for records.
³ Dong Hu was a Jin archivist of the Spring and Autumn Annals period, famous for
his straightforwardness.
⁴ “Ultimate Reality,” bhūtatathāta, is a Buddhist term. The “Metal Immortal” is
Buddha.