

Poems by Tu Fu

All texts and translations are from *The Little Primer of Tu Fu*, by David Hawkes.

1	<p style="text-align: center;">望嶽</p> 岱宗夫如何 齊魯青未了 造化鐘神秀 陰陽割昏曉 盪胸生層雲 決皆入歸鳥 會當凌絕頂 一覽衆山小	<p style="text-align: center;">On a Prospect of T'ai-shan</p> How is one to describe this king of mountains? Throughout the whole of Ch'i and Lu one never loses sight of its greatness. In it the Creator has concentrated all that is numinous and beautiful. Its northern and southern slopes divide the dawn from the dark. The layered clouds begin at the climber's heaving chest, and homing birds fly suddenly within range of his straining eyes. One day I must stand on top of its highest peak and at a single glance see all the other mountains tiny beneath me.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">月夜</p> 今夜鄜州月 閨中只獨看 遙憐小兒女 未解憶長安 香霧雲鬟溼 清輝玉臂寒 何時倚虛幌 雙照淚痕乾	<p style="text-align: center;">Moonlit Night</p> Tonight in Fu-chou my wife will be watching this moon alone. I think with tenderness of my far-away little ones, too young to understand about their father in Ch'ang-an. My wife's soft hair must be wet from the scented night-mist, and her white arms chilled by the cold moonlight. When shall we lean on the open casement together and gaze at the moon until the tears on our cheeks are dry?
6	<p style="text-align: center;">春望</p> 國破山河在 城春草木深 感時花濺淚 恨別鳥驚心 烽火連三月 家書抵萬金 白頭搔更短 渾欲不勝簪	<p style="text-align: center;">Spring Scene</p> The state may fall, but the hills and streams remain. It is spring in the city: grass and leaves grow thick. The flowers shed tears of grief for the troubled times, and the birds seem startled, as if with the anguish of separation. For three months continuously the beacon-fires have been burning. A letter from home would be worth a fortune. My white hair is getting so scanty from worried scratching that soon there won't be enough to stick my hatpin in!

<p>8</p>	<p>春宿左省 花隱掖垣墓 啾啾棲鳥過 星臨萬戶動 月傍九霄多 不寢聽金鑰 因風想玉珂 明朝有封事 數問夜如何</p>	<p>Spring Night in the Imperial Chancellery</p> <p>Evening falls on palace walls shaded by flowering trees, with cry of birds flying past on their way to roost. The stars quiver as they look down on the myriad doors of the palace, and the moon's light increases as she moves into the ninefold sky. Unable to sleep, I seem to hear the sound of the bronze-clad doors opening for the audience, or imagine the sound of bridle-bells borne upon the wind. Having a sealed memorial to submit at tomorrow's levée, I make frequent inquiries about the progress of the night.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>月夜憶舍弟 戍鼓斷人行 邊秋一雁聲 露從今夜白 月是故鄉明 有弟皆分散 無家問死生 寄書長不達 況乃未休兵</p>	<p>Thinking of My Brothers on a Moonlit Night</p> <p>Travel is interrupted by the war-drums of the garrisons. The sound of a solitary wild goose announces the coming of autumn to the frontier. From tonight onwards the dew will be white. The moon is that same moon which shines down on my birthplace. My brothers are scattered in different places. I have no home to tell me whether they are alive or dead. The letters we write never seem to reach their destination; and it will be worse now that we are at war once more.</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>蜀相 丞相祠堂何處尋 錦官城外柏森森 映堦碧草自春色 隔業黃鸝空好音 三顧頻煩天下計 兩朝開濟老臣心 出師未捷身先死 長使英雄淚滿襟</p>	<p>The Chancellor of Shu</p> <p>Where is the shrine of the Chancellor to be found?—Beyond the walls of the City of Brocade, amidst densely growing cypresses. Vivid against the steps, the emerald grass celebrates its own spring unseen. Beyond the trees a yellow oriole sings its glad song unheard.</p> <p>The importunate humility of those three visits resulted in the grand strategy which shaped the world for a generation; his services under two reigns, both as founder and as maintainer, revealed the true loyalty of the old courtier's heart. That he should have died before victory could crown his expedition will always draw a sympathetic tear from men of heroic stamp.</p>

<p>17</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">客至</p> <p>舍南舍北皆春水 但見群鷗日日來 花徑不曾緣客掃 蓬門今始爲君開 盤飧市遠無兼味 樽酒家貧只舊醅 肯與鄰翁相對飲 隔籬呼取盡餘杯</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Guest</p> <p>The waters of springtime flow north and south of my dwelling. Only the flocks of gulls come daily to call on me. I have not swept my flower-strewn path for a visitor, and my wicker-gate opens the first time today for you. Because the market is far away, the dishes I serve you offer little variety; and because this is a poor household, the only wine in my jars comes from an old brewing. If you are willing to sit and drink with my old neighbour, I shall call to him over the fence to come and finish off the remaining cupfuls with us.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>聞官軍收河南河北</p> <p>劍外忽傳收薊北 初聞涕淚滿衣裳 卻看妻子愁何在 漫卷詩書喜欲狂 白日放歌須縱酒 青春作伴好還鄉 即從巴峽穿巫峽 便下襄陽向洛陽</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">On Learning of the Recovery of Honan and Hopei by the Imperial Army</p> <p>To the land south of Chian-ko news is suddenly brought of the recovery of Chi-pei. When I first hear it, my gown is all wet with tears. I turn and look round at my wife and children, and have not a sorrow in the world. Carelessly I roll together the volumes of verse I have been reading, almost delirious with joy. There must be singing out loud in full daylight: we must drink and drink! I must go back home: the green spring shall be my companion. I shall go at once, by way of the Pa Gorge, through the Wu Gorge, then to Hsiang-yang, and so, from there, on towards Loyang!</p>
<p>21</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">登樓</p> <p>花近高樓傷客心 萬方多難此登臨 錦江春色來天地 玉壘浮雲變古今 北極朝廷終不改 西山寇盜莫相侵 可憐後主還祠廟 日暮聊爲梁父吟</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">On the Tower</p> <p>Flowers near the high tower sadden the heart of the visitor. It is at a time when the Empire is everywhere beset by troubles that he has climbed up to see this view. The Brocade River scene, dressed in spring's colours, brings a whole universe before his eyes, whilst the floating clouds above Marble Fort Mountain seem to unfold all time in their mutating shapes. The Court of the Northern Star remains unchanged. Let the marauders from the Western Mountains cease their raiding! Even the poor Second Ruler still has his shrine. As evening falls I shall sing a song of Liang-fu.</p>

<p>22</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">宿府</p> <p>清秋幕府井梧寒 獨宿江城蠟炬殘 永夜角聲悲自語 中天月色好誰看 風塵荏苒音書絕 關塞蕭條行路難 已忍伶俜十年事 強移棲息一枝安</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A Night at Headquarters</p> <p>In the clear autumn air, the wu-t'ung trees beside the well in the courtyard of the Governor's headquarters have a chilly look. I am staying alone here in the River City. The wax candle is burning low. Through the long night distant bugles talk mournfully to themselves, and there is no one to watch the lovely moon riding in the midst of the sky. Protracted turmoils have cut us off from letters, and travelling is difficult through the desolate frontier passes. Having endured ten years of vexatious trials, I have perforce moved here to roost awhile on this single peaceful bough.</p>
<p>29</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">閣夜</p> <p>歲暮陰陽催短景 天涯霜雪霽寒霄 五更鼓角聲悲壯 三峽星河影動搖 野哭千家聞戰伐 夷歌幾處起漁樵 臥龍躍馬終黃土 人事音書漫寂寥</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Night at West House</p> <p>In the evening of the year nature's forces swiftly hustle out the brief daylight. Night at the world's end is clear and cold after the frost and snow. The drums and bugles of the fifth watch sound, stirring and sad. Over the Three Gorges the luminous shape of the starry river trembles. In the countryside weeping rises from a thousand homes who have learned of the fighting, whilst here and there outlandish songs can be heard, sung by some fisherman or woodcutter about his work. Sleeping Dragon and Horse Leaper ended in the yellow dust. Idle to feel melancholy at the vexations of life and the lack of news from friends and kinsmen!</p>
<p>32</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">旅夜書懷</p> <p>細草微風岸 危檣獨夜舟 星垂平野闊 月湧大江流 名豈文章著 官應老病休 飄飄何所似 天地一沙鷗</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Thoughts Written While Travelling at Night</p> <p>By the bank where the fine grass bends in a gentle wind, my boat's tall mast stands in the solitary night. The stars hang down over the great emptiness of the level plain, and the moon bobs on the running waters of the Great River. Literature will bring me no fame. A career is denied me by age and sickness. What do I most resemble in my aimless wanderings? A seagull drifting between earth and sky!</p>