

Autumn Begins

Autumn begins unnoticed. Nights slowly lengthen,
and little by little, clear winds turn colder and colder,
summer's blaze giving way. My thatch hut grows still.
At the bottom stair, in bunchgrass, lit dew shimmers.

Gathering Firewood

Gathering firewood I enter mountain depths,
mountain depths rising creek beyond creek

choked with the timbers of bridges in ruins.
Vines tumble low, tangled over cragged paths,

and at dusk, scarce people grow scarcer still.
Mountain wind sweeping through simple robes,

my chant steady, I shoulder a light bundle,
watch smoke drift across open country home.

Listening to Cheng Yin Play His *Ch'in*

Another Juan Chi ripening wine's renown
in bamboo forests full of crystalline wind,

you sit half drunk, let down flowing sleeves
and sweep your dragon-rimmed *ch'in* clean.

Then it's a fresh tune for each cup of wine,
dusk's blaze sinking away unnoticed. Soon,

thoughts deep among rivers and mountains,
I hear this mind my former lives all share.

Adrift on North Creek

North Creek always runs ample and full.
A drifting boat can explore in and out,
upstream and down, wonders everywhere.
Who needs all that five-lakes grandeur?

Climbing Long-View Mountain's Highest Peak

Rivers and mountains beyond the form seen:
Hsiang-yang's beauty brings them in reach,

and Long-View has the highest peak around.
Somehow I'd never climbed its cragged heights,

its rocky cliffs like walls hacked and scraped
and towering over mountains crowded near,

but today, skies so bright and clear, I set out.
Soon the far end of sight's all boundless away,

Cloud-Dream southlands a trifle in the palm,
Warrior Knoll lost in that realm of blossoms.

And back on my horse, riding home at dusk,
a vine-sifted moon keeps the stream lit deep.

**Looking for the Recluse Chang Tzu-jung
at White-Crane Cliff**

On a trail atop White-Crane's green cliffs,
my recluse friend's at home in solitude,

step and courtyard empty water and rock,
forest and creek free of axe and fish trap.

Months and years perfect old pines here.
Wind and frost keep bitter bamboo sparse.

Gazing deep, ancestral ways my own again,
I set out wandering toward my simple hut.

**Adrift on a Summer's Day, I Visit the
Hermitage of Recluse T'eng**

Ch'i chill-thickened at the water pavilion,
oars all idleness, I stop by to visit. It's late,

pine and bamboo alight in stream shadow,
lotus and chestnut scenting fragrant pools.

Country kids freshen our wine-loose dance,
mountain birds laugh with our tipsy song,

until delight in quiet mystery deepens into
adoration: dusk-lit mist, the inevitable dark.

**Inscribed on a Wall at Li's Farm,
for Ch'i-wu Ch'ien**

I heard about your ease here in shade
among willow forests east of city walls,

rivers Ch'an and Chien left and right,
Cord-Hilt Mountain for your courtyard.

Bringing my *ch'in*, I came to sip wine,
play out a fishing line, savor idleness.

No one waits back home. My wanderer's
return follows a creek up to its source.

**On Reaching the Ju River Dikes,
Sent to My Friend Lu**

Road-weary, giving the horse a break,
I find myself gazing at Ju River dikes.

The Lo River is open now, free of snow.
On Sung peaks, twilight clouds linger,
trailed halfway across empty skies, lit
colors surging elemental and swelling.

I'm sending here this moment of itself—
how it just keeps unfurling, unfurling.

On Reaching the Han River

This land, not yet home— it's incredible.
Mountains crowd bamboo greens close,

level fields rare out beyond city walls,
ridges snaking up into distant clouds.

Ten thousand canyons reaching the Han,
a thousand peaks etched into azure sky,

gibbons cry confusions of Ch'u gorges
and a familiar drawl slurs people's talk.

Thickets of pepper trees crown rocks
and beehives hang stitched into vines

amid lingering snow in a frosty spring.
Dawn's thinned away mist across this

landscape that's worn my horse ragged,
and a sail loves open expanses. Soaring

away downstream, I delight. In two days
I'll gaze into mulberry groves of home.

**Roaming up to Master Jung's Hermitage
at Lumen-Empty Monastery**

On paths where dragons and stars wander,
halfway up to peaks, I cross a rocky pass,

blur into blue cliffs, perpetual confusion,
adore idleness everywhere in green vines.

Then it's ease in blossoming forests, lofty
talk facing bamboo islands. Far from dust,

silent, empty: this Hen's-Foot Mountain
opening that first adept to enlightenment.