

# JADE LUTE

Renderings in Literary Scots and English

from fifty ancient Chinese poems

by

David Purves

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## Ancient Chinese Poems in Scots and English

**Anonymous** (1st Century BC)

### *ORPHAN*

*Whan ma mither an faither war leevin,  
Ah uised ti hurl in a cairriage wi fower braw horses.  
But whan thay baith dee'd, Ah tell ye:  
ma brither telt me ti dae the denner.  
Ma guidsister says: "See you til the horses!"  
Ah wes never duin climmin up intil the haw,  
syne rinnin doun again til the parlor,  
never aff the gae an hattert fair ti daith.  
Ah wes aye greitin an ma tears fell lyke the rain.  
In the mornins thay sent me ti draw wattir,  
an Ah never wan back or the gloamin.  
Ma haunds war aw sair, an shuin Ah haed nane.  
Ah gaed aboot barefuit, strampin on thrissils.  
In wunter, nae tapcoat ti keep oot the cauld,  
an in Simmer, Ah haed nae thin claes for the heat.  
The'r nae pleisir in leevin an Ah'd suiner be deid.  
Ah wad fain skreive a letter an send it  
til ma mither an faither doun unner the mouls,  
an tell thaim, nae mair can Ah thole it  
up here, wi ma brither an sister,  
bydin, in whit wes aye ma hame  
an traetit lyke an outlin sornier.*

**Anonymous (1<sup>st</sup> Century BC)**

*ORPHAN*

*When my mother and father were living,  
I rode in a carriage with four fine horses,  
but when they both died, I can tell you,  
my brother told me to make the dinner.  
My goodsister says: "You see to the horses!"  
I was never done climbing up to the hall,  
then running back down to the parlor.  
Never off the go and worked near to death,  
I cried all the time and my tears fell like rain.  
In the morning they sent me to draw water  
and I never got back til the evening.  
My hands were all sore, and shoes I had none.  
I went about barefoot, tramping on thistles.  
In winter, no topcoat to keep out the cauld,  
and in Summer, no thin clothes for the heat.  
No pleasure in living and I'd sooner be dead.  
I would fain write a letter and send it  
to mother and father down in the ground  
and tell them, no more can I bear it  
up here with my brother and sister,  
living in what once was my home,  
and treated like an stranger slave.*

*SOUTH O THE GRET SEA*

*Ma luiv is nou leevin  
ti the south o the Gret Sea.  
Whit sal Ah send him for a praisent?  
Twa paerls an a kaim o tortoise-shell.*

\* \* \* \*

*Ah hear word he is no true:  
Thay tell me he clasht ma box ti the grund,  
clasht it ti the grund an brunt it,  
syne sperfilt its auss ti the wund.  
It's aw yin wi ma brukken hert.  
Frae this day til the ends o tyme  
Ah maun never think o him---  
never think on him again.  
Ah hear the cocks ir crawin,  
an the dugs ir aw berkin---  
Ma brither an his guidwyfe  
wul suin ken aw about it.  
The Back End wund is blawin,  
the snell mornin wund is souchin.  
In a meinit the sun wul ryse in the East  
an syne it wul ken anaw.*

*SOUTH OF THE GREAT SEA*

*My love is now living  
South of the Great Sea.  
What shall I send him for a present?  
Two pearls and a tortoise-shell comb.*

\* \* \*

*Now I hear word he is not true:  
that he dashed my box to the grund;  
dashed it to the grund and burned it,  
then scattered its ash to the wind.  
It's all one with my broken heart.  
From this day to the end of time  
I must never think of him---  
Never think of him again.  
I hear the cocks are now crowing,  
and the watch dogs are barking---  
My brother and his goodwife  
will soon know all about it.  
The Autmn wind is blowing,  
The keen morning wind is sighing.  
In a minute the sun wull rise again  
and then it will know as well.*

**Anonymous** (1<sup>st</sup> Century BC)

*THE ITHHER SYDE*

*Ah im a prisoner in the fae's haunds,  
tholin the shame o ma thirldom.  
Ma banes stick oot an ma strenth  
is near gaen for want o guid meat,  
but ma brither is a Mandarin  
that wants aye for naething.  
His horses wire in til the best o corn.  
He nicht hae spared a pikkil siller  
ti send here for ti ransom me!  
In his steid, Ah wad hae duin  
as mukkil for him, sae Ah wad!*

*THE OTHER SIDE*

*I am a captive in the hands of the foe,  
suffering the shame of my captivity.  
My bones protude and my strength  
is near gone for lack of good food,  
but my brother is a Mandarin  
who always lacks for nothing.  
His horses are fed on the best of corn.  
He might have spared a little money  
to send here here and ransom me!  
In his place, I would have done  
as much for him, so I would!*

**Anonymous** (1<sup>st</sup> to 2nd Century)

*ETERNITIE*

*Ah caw ma chairiot up til the Aistern Yett;  
ferr awa Ah see the graff-yaird North o the Waw.  
The whyte esps thare; hou they reishil, reishil!  
Pines an cypressess in raws deskrive braid pads.  
Ablo liggs men that dee'd langsyne:  
blek, blek's the lang nicht that hauds thaim.  
Deep doun anaith the Yallae Springs,  
thousands o year thay ligg athout awaukenin.  
Ayebydinlie, the licht an mirk abuin tak turn;  
awa sants the bounless years lik mornin dew.*

*The days o Man is lyke a short byde-ower:  
they want the siccarness o stane an airn.  
An aye the murners in thair turn ir murned.  
Sanct an shenachie --- aw is trapp't the same.  
Ettlin frae meat ti win ayelestin lyfe,  
monie hae been begowk't bi unco drogs.  
Better bi ferr ti waucht guid wyne  
an cleid oorsells in gouns o silk an saitin.  
The deid is gaen – wi thaim we canna speak.  
The leevin is here an thay soud hae oor luiv.*

*Quuttin the Ceitie Yett Ah luik aheid  
an see afore me nocht but knowes an tombs.  
The auld lairs is ploued up intil riggs;  
the pines an cypresses cawed doun for timmer.  
In the whyte esps the dowf wunds souch;  
thair endless whusperin deids ma hert wi dule.  
Ah want ti gang hame, ti ryde ti ma toun yett.  
Ah wad fain gang hame, but the'r nae road back.*

## *ETERNITY*

*I drive my chariot up to the East Gate.  
In the distance I see the graveyard North of the Wall.  
How the white aspens there rustle, rustle!  
Pines and cypresses in rows define broad paths.  
Below lie men who died long, long ago.  
Black's the long night that holds them.  
Deep down below the Yellow Springs,  
thousands of years they lie without awakening.  
Forever the light and darkness tak turn;  
boundless years disappear like morning dew.*

*The days of man are like an interlude:  
they lack the certainty of stone and iron.  
Always the mourners in their turn are mourned.  
Saint and shenachie: all are trapped the same,  
aiming from food to achieve immortality,  
and many have been deceived by alien drugs.  
Better by far to drink good wine and clad  
ourselves in gowns of silk and satin.  
The dead are gone – with them we cannot speak.  
The living are here and they should have our love.*

*Leaving the City Gate I look ahead  
and see before me nought but mounds and tombs.  
The old graves plowed up into fields;  
The pines and cypresses felled down for timber.  
In the white aspens the sad winds sigh;  
their endless whispering deadens my heart.  
I want to go home, but there's no road back.*



**Su Wu (2<sup>nd</sup> Century)**

**DRAFTIT**

*Thay mairrit us whan thay pit  
up oor hair. We war juist twantie  
an fifteen. An ever sensyne  
oor luiv haes never been taigilt.  
The-nicht we hae the auld jey  
in ither, altho oor bliss,  
Ah dout, wul nou suin be ower.  
Ah think wi dreid on the lang mairch  
that streiks afore me, an oot  
Ah gae an goave at the ootlin sterna,  
ti see hou the nicht is weirin on.  
Ah see that Betelgeuse an Antares  
haes baith dwyned oot. It's tyme  
for me nou ti gae for ferrawa  
battilgrunds. Nae wey o kennin  
if we ir ever lyke ti see  
ither again. We claucht  
ither wi oor twa begrutten faces.  
Sae fare ye weill ma darlin!  
Hain aye the Spring flouers o  
yeir bewtie that blooms but aince!  
Think on the days you an me  
war sae blyth thegither!  
Gin Ah leeve, Ah wul cum back  
Gin Ah die, mynd on me foraye!*

**DRAFTED**

*They married us when they put  
our hair up. We were only twenty  
and fifteen. And ever since then  
our love has remained true.  
Tonight we still have the old joy  
in one another, although our bliss,  
I fear, will now soon be over.  
I think with dread on the long trail  
that stretches out before me, and out  
I go an gaze at the distant stars,  
to see how the night is wearing on  
I see that Betelgeuse and Antares  
have both died out. It's time  
for me to set out for distant  
battlegrounds. No way of knowing  
if we will ever likely see  
one another again. We hug each  
other with our tear-stained faces.  
So fare you well my darling!  
Keep always the Spring flowers of  
Your beauty that bloom but once!  
Think on the days that you and I  
were so happy together!  
If I survive, I will return.  
If I die, remember me forever!*

**Anonymous (300-500)**

**A LASSIE'S PROBLEM**

*In the Spring we ingether the mulberry leafs.  
At the Simmer's end we rowe down the cocoons.  
Gin a yung quyne dargs aw day an aw nicht,  
hou can she finnd tyme for ti git mairrit?*

**A GIRL'S PROBLEM**

*In the Spring we gather mulberry leaves.  
At the Summer's end we unroll the cocoons.  
If a young lass toils all day and all night,  
How can she find time to get married/*

**Anonymous** (4<sup>th</sup> Century)

*THE LITTIL LEDDIE*

*Hir door opent on the whyte wattir  
neirhaund the shakkin timmer brig.  
That's whaur the littil leddie bade—  
Aw hir lane athouten a man.*

*THE LITTLE LADY*

*Her door opened on the white water  
Nearby the shaking timber bridge.  
That's where the little lady dwelled--  
All by herself without a man.*

**T'ao Yuan Ming** (365-427)

*HAME HINNERLIE*

*Frae a loun Ah never mukkil lykit the toun.  
Ah never forgot the bens whaur Ah wes born.  
The warld claucht me an yokit me  
an fairlie harlt me throu the stour  
for thertie year, awa frae hame.  
The swallaes returns aye til the same tree.  
Fish soums back til the puils thay war spawned.  
Ah hae been aw ower the haill kintrie  
an hae cum back again til ma ain gairden.  
Ma ferm is anerlie ten acre lyke.  
The ferm houss haes echt or nyne chaumers.  
Birks an sauchs beild the back gairden.  
Peach trees staun bi the houss door.  
The clachan is richt oot o sicht.  
Ye can hear the dugs berk in the loans  
an cocks craw in the mulberry trees.  
Whan ye cum throu the yett inti the court,  
ye wul finnd here nae stour or midden.  
Saucht an quaeit sains ilka chaumer.  
Ah im content ti byde here the lave o ma days,  
for at lest, Ah hae fund masell.*

**T'ao Yuan Ming (365-427)**

*HOME AT LAST*

*From a child I never much liked the town.  
I never forgot the hills where I was born.  
But the world took me and yoked me  
and drove me through dirt and care  
for thirty years away from my home.  
The swallows return to the same tree.  
Fish swim back to the pools they were spawned.  
I have been all over the whole country  
and now I am back again to my own garden.  
My farm is only about ten acres.  
The farm house has eight or nine rooms.  
Birches and willows shelter the back garden.  
Peach trees stand by the house door.  
The clachan is well out of sight,  
but you can hear the dogs bark in the lanes  
and cocks crow in the mulberry trees.  
When you pass the gate into the yard,  
you will find here no mess or midden.  
Peace and quiet blesses every room.  
I am glad to live here the rest of my days,  
for at last I have found myself again.*

**T'ao Yuan Ming (365-427)**

*PUIR BURDS*

*The trees in ma aistlin gairden  
birze oot thair new twigs.  
They ettil ti kittil new joy.  
An men say the sun an muin keeps movin  
aye, kis thay canna finnd a saft saet,  
but the burds flichter ti rest in ma tree,  
an Ah hear thaim sayin, thinks Ah:  
“It’s no that the’r nae ither men,  
but we lyke this cheil the best,  
but houever we lang ti speak o’t,  
he can never ken o oor dule.”*

**T'ao Yuan Ming** (365-427)

*POOR BIRDS*

*The trees in my eastern garden  
thrust out their new twigs  
intending to create new joy.  
And men say the sun and moon keep  
moving, since they can't find a seat,  
but the birds flutter to rest in my tree,  
and I hear them saying, I think:  
"We know that there are other men,  
but we like this man the best,  
but however we long to speak of it,  
he can never know our sorrow?"*

**Ho Hsun** (5<sup>th</sup> Century)

*THE FERR TRAVLAR*

*The traivlar wi his lourd hert  
gaes aff himlane for a thousan myle.  
On the mirk wattir i the teimin rain:  
whyte horses skiffin afore the wund.*

*THE FAR TRAVELER*

*The traveler with his heavy heart  
sets off himself for a thousand miles.  
On the dark waves in the drenching rain:  
white horses charging before the wind.*

**Ng Shao** (6<sup>th</sup> Century)

*THE NEW WYFE*

*Day eftir day ma silken gouns growes lowss.  
The peach an ploum blossoms wede awa.  
Ah dream o ma yung guidman at never cums hame.  
Whan he dis..... Ai, Ah dout he winna ken me!*

*THE NEW WIFE*

*Every day that passes my silken gowns grow loose.  
The peach and plum blossoms fade away.  
I dream of my young man that never comes home.  
When he does, I fear he will not know me.*

**Ho Ch'e Ch'ang (659-744)**

*HAMECUMMIN*

*Ah wes a bit loun whan Ah left hame.  
Ah cam back a cruppen bodach.  
Ah think Ah mynd the kintrie speak,  
but ma heid's inti snaw sen Ah spak it.  
The bairns forgether an gove at me,  
but naebodie richt unnerstauns me.  
Thay luik at me an lauch, an yin  
wi a richt snotterie-lik neb spiers:  
"Whaur div EE cum frae, ma Lord?"*

*HOMECOMMING*

*I was but a boy when I left home.  
I returned here a bent old man.  
I should remember the country speak  
but my head's into snow since I spoke it.  
The children gather and stare at me,  
but nobody seems to understand me.  
They look at me and laugh, and one  
with a snottery nose asks me:  
"Where do YOU come from, my Lord?"*

**Wang Chi (ca.700)**

*GAUN TI THE PUB*

*Thir days, foraye fouzilt wi the drink,  
Ah never slokken the drouth o the saul.  
But whan Ah see ither men aye fou,  
it's ill for ti byde sober masell!*

*GOING TO THE PUB*

*These days, always the worse for drink,  
I never quench the thirst of the soul.  
But when I see other men always drunk,  
it's hard to stay sober myself.*

**Wang Wei (701-761)**

*HIELAND GLOAMIN*

*Mang the lanesum bens eftir the new rain,  
the forenicht is fresh afore the Back End.  
The bricht muin leims atwein the pines.  
The kirstal wattir skelters ower the stanes.  
Quynes hoyin hame frae the wash in the linn  
Reishil back slae, throu the bamboo shaws.  
Lotus leafs dance bi the fisherman's boat.  
The perfumed whuffs o the Simmer haes gaen,  
tho thair maimorie hauds for monie a day.*

Wang Wei (701-761)

*HIGHLAND DUSK*

*Among the lonesome mountains after the rain  
the evening is fresh before the Autumn comes.  
The brilliant moon gleams between the pines.  
The clear stream skelters over the stones.  
Girls wending home from the wash in the stream  
rustle slowly through the bamboo growth  
Lotus leaves wave by the fisherman's boat.  
The fragrance of the Summer has now gone  
though the memory lingers for many a day.*

Ch'u Ch'uang I (Early 8th Century)

*KINTRIE HOUSS*

*Ah plantit a hunder mulberry trees  
an fullie thertie acre o guid rice  
an nou Ah hae rowth o silk an grain  
an can afford ti walcum ma freins.  
In the Spring, Ah plant the rice.  
In the Faw, Ah gether chrysanths  
an parfume the wyne wi thair petals.  
Ma guidwyfe lykes ti be hostess  
an ma bairns is aye keen ti serr.  
The late eftirnuin we aw hae a splore  
at the fuit o oor kitchen gairden.  
In the beild o the birkenshaw  
ma freins beb awa or thay'r fou.  
A caller saur cuils the heat o the day.*

*An whan thay hae aw stoitert hame,  
Ah dauner oot ablo the nicht lift  
an goave at the thousans o outlin sterns  
that winks down at me frae the heivins.  
Ah aye hae a hantil jous o wine left  
i the grundhous, an wha'l hinner me  
frae hanselin mair the-morn?*

*COUNTRY HOUSE*

*I planted a hundred mulberry trees  
and fully thirty acres of good rice  
and now I have a lot of silk and grain  
and can afford to welcome my friends.  
In the Spring, I plant my rice.  
At the Fall, I gather chrysanths  
to perfume my wine with their petals.  
My goodwife likes fine to be hostess  
and my children are keen to help serve.  
In the latre afternoon we all picnic  
at the foot of our kitchen garden.  
In the shade of the birches and willows  
my friends drink away till they're full.  
A cool breeze helps the heat of the day.*

*And when they have all staggered home,  
I stroll out below the night sky  
and gaze at the thousands of far stars  
that blink down at me from the heavens  
I still have some jugs of wine left  
in the cellar, and who will stop me  
from opening more tomorrow?*

**Li Po (701-762)**

*A FLUIT AT LOYANG*

*Frae whas houss airts the soun  
o this clear fluit Ah hear?  
Its wheipil thirls throu the mirk  
atwein the Spring wunds  
that fills Lo Ceitie.*

*On hearin this ae forenicht,  
the lilt o, "Brekin the Widdies",  
wha wul no bring ti mynd  
lown gairdens langsyne?*

*A FLUTE AT LOYANG*

*From whose house comes the sound  
of this clear flute I hear?  
Its note thrills through the dark  
between the Spring breezes  
that fill Lo City.*

*On hearing this one evening  
the sound of "Breaking the Withies",  
who will not bring to mind  
still gardens lang ago?*

**Tu Fu (712-770)**

*DESERT VIEW*

*A clear Back End. Ah goave intil  
endless skowth. The easin kelters  
in bands o skaum. Ferr awa  
the river rins on lyke intil the lift.  
The lane ceitie is bleirit wi reik.  
The wund blows the lest leafs awa.  
The hills derken as the sun gaes down.  
A singil cran flies late ti reist.  
The gloamin trees ir thrang wi craws.*

*DESERT VIEW*

*A clear Back End. I stare into  
endless space. The horizon shimmers  
in bands of haze. Far away,  
the river runs on to merge in the sky.  
The lonely city is blurred with reek.  
The wind blows the last leaves away.  
The hills darken as the sun goes down.  
A single crane flies late to roost.  
The evening trees are filled with crows.*

*CLEAR EFTIR RAIN*

*The Faw, an cloud on the easin.  
The Wast wund blows frae ten thousan myle.  
At dawin, i the clear mornin air we see,  
the fermers eydent eftir the lang rain.  
The desert trees skail thair lest green leafs.  
The peirs on the bens ir wee but maumie.  
A Tertar fluit wheipils bi the toun yett.  
A singil wyld guiss sklins intil the tuim lift.*

**Tu Fu (712-770)**

*CLEAR AFTER RAIN*

*The Fall and cloud on the horizon.  
The West wind blows from ten thousand miles.  
At dawn in the clear morning air, we see  
The farmers busy after the long rain.  
The desert trees lose their last green leaves.  
The pears on the hills are small but tasty.  
A Tartar flute shrills by the town gate.  
A single wild goose climbs into the sky.*

*DAWIN OWER THE BENS*

*The ceitie is lown  
soun synds awa, biggins  
sant in the dawin's licht,  
cauld sunlicht glents  
on the heichmaist peak,  
an the lourd stour o nicht  
haps aye on the brae face.  
The yird reveals itsell,  
the river boats swither,  
the quaet lift abuin---  
the reishil o fawin leafs.  
A mukkil dae trips delicat  
richt up til the gairden yett,  
sindert frae the herd,  
fair lost an feartlyke—  
seekin aye its freins.*

*DAWN ON THE MOUNTAINS*

*The city is tranquil,  
sound ebbs awa, buildings  
disappear in the dawn's light,  
cold sunklight gleams  
on the highest peak,  
and the heavy dust of night  
covers the hill face.  
The earth reveals itself,  
the river boats hesitate  
the sky above is still---  
the rustle of falling leaves.  
A big doe trips delicate  
right up to the garden gate,  
sundert from the herd,  
lost and frightened---  
seeking its own kind.*

*THE SAUCH*

*The sauch in ma neibor's gairden  
reishils its delicat brainches,  
douceyke an fou o grace.  
It brings me in mynd, lyke,  
o a bonnie quyne o fifteen.  
The-day Ah'm fair dowie, turnt,  
kis this mornin the coorse wund  
dung down its langest brainch.*

*THE WILLOW TREE*

*The willow tree in my neighbor's garden  
sways its slender branches,  
quietly and gracefully.  
At times, it rather reminds me  
of a pretty lass of fifteen.  
Today I am very sad  
since this morning the wind  
broke down its longest branch.*



**Rihaku** (8<sup>th</sup> Century)

*LUIV FORAYE*

*Whan ma hair wes yit cut strecht on ma brou,  
Ah played about the front yett, pouin the flouers.  
Ye lampit by on bamboo stilts, be-in a horse, lyke.  
Ye daunert aroun ma saet, playin wi blue ploums  
an we gaed on leevin in the clachan:  
twa smaw bodies, wi nae ill in thaim.*

*At fowerteen Ah mairrit Ma Lord Fou.  
Ah never laucht, no be-in forritsum, lyke.  
Bouin ma heid, Ah goaved at the waw.  
Cryit a thousan tymes, Ah never gledged back.*

*At fifteen Ah stappit glowerin.  
Ah wantit ma stour ti be melled  
wi yours forever, an aye an foraye.  
Whit for soud Ah be sklimmin the look-oot?*

*At saxteen ye gaed awa.  
Hyne awa ye gaed ti Ku-to-yen,  
bi the river o swurlin swaws,  
an ye hae been gaen fullie five munth.  
The monkeys girn dulesum abuin.*

*Ye trauchilt yeir feet whan ye gaed oot.  
Bi the yett nou, ither mosses haes growne,  
ower deep for ti clear thaim awa!  
In the wund this Back End, the leafs ir suin down,  
an butterflie pairs turnt yallae wi August  
birl ower the gress in the Wastlin gairden.  
Aye Ah growe aulder an it hurts me ti see thaim.  
Gin ye cum throu the cleuch o the River Kiang,  
please tell me afore an Ah'l hoy on oot  
for ti meet ye, the lenth o Cho-fu-Sa?*

**Rihaku (8<sup>th</sup> Century)**

*LOVE FOREVER*

*When my hair was still cut straight on my brow,  
I played around the front gate, pulling flowers.  
You strode past on your bamboo stilts, being a horse.  
You wandered around my seat, playing with plums  
and we carried on living in the village  
two little children with no ill in them.*

*At fourteen, I married My Lord Fou.  
I never laughed, not being forward in manner.  
Bowing my head, I stared at the wall.  
Cried a thousand times, I never glanced back.*

*At fifteen I stopped glaring.  
I wanted my dust to be blended  
with yours forever and ever.  
So why should I be climbing the lookout?*

*At sixteen ye went away.  
Far away you went to Ku-to-yen,  
by the river of billowing swells,  
and have been gone now for fully five months.  
The monkeys cry sadly above.*

*You trailed with your feet when you left me.  
By the gate now, new mosses have grown,  
too deep now to be cleared away!  
With the wind this Autumn, the leaves are soon down,  
and butterfly pairs turned yellow in August,  
twirl over the grass in the garden.  
As I grow older, it hurts me to see them.  
If you come through the vale of Kiang River,  
please tell me before and I'll hasten  
to meet you as far as Cho-fu-Sa!*

**Rihaku (8<sup>th</sup> Century)**

*PAIRTIN FRAE A FREIN*

*Blue bens up ti the North o the waws,  
whyte wattir rinkin about thaim;  
here we maun pairt frae ither ti gae  
throu a thousan myle o deid gress.  
Mynd lyke a floatin braid cloud,  
the sunset lyke the pairtin o auld feres  
that bou ower clespit haunds frae aferr.  
Oor cannie horses nicher til ither,  
in taiken, lyke, as we sinder.*

*PARTING FROM A FRIEND*

*Blue moutains to the North of the walls,  
white water encircling them;  
here we must part from each other  
for a thousand miles of dead grass.  
Mind like broad floating cloud,  
the sunset like the parting of old friends  
who bow with clasped hands from afar.  
Our gentle horses neigh to each other  
as in token, as we move apart.*

**Po Chü-I (772-846)**

*EFTIR DENNER*

*Eftir denner – ae short nap:  
on waukenin up – twa cups o tea.  
On liftin ma heid, Ah see the sun's licht  
airtin aince mair ti the south-wast.  
Thaim that is blyth is vext  
at the shortness o the day;  
thaim that is dowie, whyles staw  
at the lang wearie oors.  
Whas herts ken naither joy or dule,  
juist cairrie on leevin for aw.*

*AFTER DINNER*

*After dinner, a brief nap:  
on waking up—two cups of tea.  
On lifting my head, I see the sun's light  
slanted more to the south-west.  
Those who are cheerful are vexed  
at the shortness of the days;  
those who are sad and depressed,  
resent the long weary hours.  
Whose hearts know no joy or sadness  
just carry on living whatever.*

**Tu Mu (803-852)**

*VIEW FRAE THE HICHTS*

*Ah sklim up the cauld ben bi  
a stey gait up throu the craigs  
til ma wee bit biggin here abuin,  
in the steid whaur the clouds ir born.  
Ah stap ma cairt an luik oot  
ower the forest o maples  
in the crammasie sunset---  
the freistit leafs mair kenspekkil  
nor onie o yeir flouers o Spring.*

*VIEW FROM THE HEIGHTS*

*I ascend the cold mountain by  
a steep path up among the crags  
to my little hut here above,  
in the place where the clouds are formed.  
I stop my cart and look out  
over the forest of maples  
in the crimson sunset---  
the frosted leaves more wonderful  
than any of your flowers of Spring,.*

**Lu Kuei Meng (9<sup>th</sup> Century)**

*TIL AN AULD TUIN*

*Men howp ti leeve a hunder year.  
Flouers lest but the ae Spring,  
But ae day o blatterin wund,  
thay ir sperfilt on the grund.  
Gin thay kent whit wes befawin thaim,  
thay wad be as dowie as men.*

*TO AN OLD TUNE*

*Men aspire to live a hundred years.  
Flowers survive only the one Spring.  
But one day of blustering wind,  
they are scattered on the ground.  
If they knew what was befalling them,  
they would be as sad as men.*

**Huang Chiao (-834)**

*THE CHRYSANT SPEAKS*

*Ither flouers ir in bluum, but no me.  
Aince Ah cum oot, see thair petals chitter!  
Ah hae gowden airmor, an cled in it,  
Ah'm graithed ti fecht even Boreas blaws.*

*THE CHRYSANT SPEAKS*

*Other flowers are blooming, but not me.  
Once I come out, see them chitter!  
I am clad in golden armor,  
and ready to fight even Boreas blows.*

**Mei Yao Ch'en (1002-1060)**

*ON DAITH O HIS GUIDWYFE*

*Sen we war first mairrit,  
seivinteen year haes gaen in.  
Ah luikit up bede in, an she wes awa.  
She said she wad never leave me.  
Ma haffets haes nou gaen whyte.  
Whit hae Ah ti growe auld for nou?  
In daith we wul be thegither  
in the lair, but nou Ah'm aye leevin,  
an ma tears rins down even on  
a begrutten face athout end.*

*ON HIS WIFE'S DEATH*

*Since we were first married  
seventeen years have gone in.  
I looked up and suddenly she was gone.  
She promised she would never leave me.  
My temples have now gone white.  
For what, have I to grow old now?  
In death we will be together again  
in the grave, but now I'm still living  
and my tears continually run down  
my grieving face without end.*

Mei Yao Ch'en (1002-1060)

OWER THRANG

*Ye maunna fash, man  
kis Ah'm sweir ti gae oot  
wi ye. Ye ken me ower weill  
for that. On ma lap Ah haud  
ma wee quyne. At ma knees,  
stauns ma braw wee son.  
The tane haes juist stertit ti speak.  
The tither yammers on even on.  
Thay hing aye on til ma claes  
an follae ilka step Ah tak.  
Ah juist canna manage ower  
the houss door, an Ah dout  
Ah'l never win til yeir houss.*

TOO BUSY

*You must not be annoyed  
because I'm reluctant to go out  
with you! You know me too well  
for that. On my lap I hold  
my little lass. At my knee,  
stands my fine little son.  
The one has just started to speak.  
The other chatters on without end.  
They hang always to my clothes  
and follow every step I take.  
I just cannot manage over  
the door, and I doubt  
I'll ever reach to your house.*

THE CRESCENT MUIN

*The crescent muin leims  
ower the neuk o ma houss.  
Ma neibor's dugs yowl.  
Ah dout thon failmie's in truibil  
throu the middil o the nicht.  
Bogils flies aboot an unco things steir.  
A souch whuspers ower the hie gress,  
altho nae wund blaws.*

THE CRESCENT MOON

*The crescent moon gleams  
over the corner of my house.  
My neighbor's dogs howl next door.  
I fear that family is in trouble  
during the middle of the night.  
Ghosts fly about and strange things stir.  
A sigh whispers over the high grass,  
though no wind blows.*

Su Tung p'o (1036-1101)

SHILPIT WYNE

*The waeker the wyne the easier  
it is ti waucht twae glesses.  
But the waekest wyne is aye  
better nor lew-warm wattir.  
Auld duds is better nor nae claes ava.  
An ugsum wyfe an a fashiuss byde-in  
is aye better nor a tuim houss.*

*But whan ye ir fou it maks nae odds—  
whatever Ah weir Ah feel nae cauld;  
gruesum wyfes an randie byde-ins---  
the aulder lyke thay growe  
the mair thay'r the same!*

WEAK WINE

*The weaker the wine the easier  
it is to down two glasses.  
But the weakest wine is always  
better than lew-warm water.  
Old clothese are better than no clothes.  
An ugly wife or a quarrelsome partner  
is always better than an empty house.*

*But when drunk it makes no odds--  
whatever I wear, I feel no cold;  
grueome wives and angry partners--  
the older they grow, it seems  
The more they are the same!*

**Su Tung p'o (1036-1101)**

*SOUTH ROOM BI THE WATTIR*

*The chaumer is redd up, the incense burnt,  
Ah steik the shutters afore Ah shut ma een.  
The paiterns o the quilt ir lyke the swaws on the river.  
The gauze curtain hings doun lyke a haar.  
Syne a dream cums ti me, an whan Ah wauk,  
for a wee, Ah kenna whaur Ah im ava.  
Ah open the wast winnok an goave at the swaws  
kelterin on oot ma sicht til the ferr easin,  
awa at the ferr end o ma warld.*

*SOUTH ROOM BY THE WATER*

*The chamber is tidied, the incense burned,  
I close the shutters and shut my eyes.  
The pattern on the quilt is like the waves on the river.  
The gauze curtains hang down like a mist.  
Then a dream possesses me and when I awake,  
I don't know, any more, where I am.  
I open the window and gaze at the waves  
keltering out of sight to the horizon  
away at the far end of my world.*

Su Tung p'o (1036-1101)

TERRACE IN THE SNOW

*In the gowden gloamin, the rain  
wes lyke sae monie silken threids.  
Throu the nicht it cleared awa.  
Syne it grew caulder lyke.  
Ma bed cuivers felt damp  
an cauld. Athout ma kennin,  
the snaw haed driftit intil  
ma chaumer, lyke haeps o saut.  
At the fift watch, at the first glisk  
o dawin, Ah steik the curtains  
o the study. Throu the lave  
o the nicht, Ah ligg an listen  
til the ice, bauchlin the culort  
tyles on the ruif. In the mornin,  
Ah soup the snaw frae the norlin terrace  
an keik oot at the Saidil Law.  
The ben is clear o clouds an Ah  
can see baith peaks. Abuin  
the clachan i the aerie sunlight,  
a hantil craws begins ti sweil.  
The street glaur is happit wi whyte.  
Nae cairt wheels haes fylt it yit.  
The ice haes turnt the shop ruifs  
inti whyte jade an the snaw in the entries  
is fair inti gless. The lest o the chirkers  
haes gaen ti grund langsyne.  
Nou thay wul hae ti howk deep doun.  
Sum clouds forgether, the culor o moss  
But here, ma kist is batherin me again!  
Ah im nithert an cruppen wi cauld.  
Ah feel Ah hae tint the wull ti wryte  
awthegither. The icicles on the easins  
dirl i the wund like the swords  
o bangster murderers.*

TERRACE IN THE SNOW

*In the golden evening, the rain  
was like so many silk threads  
till by night it had cleared away.  
Then it seemed to grow colder.  
My bed covers felt damp  
and chilly. Without my noticing,  
the snow had drifted into  
my chamber, like heaps of salt.  
At the fifth watch, at the first glimpse  
of dawn, I shut the curtains  
of the chamber. For the rest  
of the night, I lie and listen  
to the ice, distorting the colored  
tiles on the roof. In the morning  
I sweep the North Terrace clear  
And look out at the Saddle Hill.  
The top is clear of clouds and I  
can see both peaks. Above  
the village in the morning light  
some crows begin to circle.  
The street mud is now white-covered.  
No cart wheels have marked it yet.  
The ice has turned the shop roofs  
into white jade and snow in entries  
is into glass. The last of the chirpers  
have gone to ground long ago.  
Now they will have to dig deep down.  
A few clouds gather, the color of moss.  
But my chest is bothering me again.  
I am shivering and bent with cold.  
I feel I have lost the will to write  
altogether. The icicles on the eaves  
whine in the wind like the swords  
of violent murderers.*

**Chou Pang-yen (1057-1121)**

*THE AFF-PIT*

*She peels fresh oranges for hir jo,  
waidgin a blade that haes a watterie leim.  
Raisin hir een til his, she offers him  
a reed-pype an pits yin til hir ain lips.  
Thegither thay wheipil, the notes dwynin intil  
the scentit haze whufft bi the incense burner.  
She draps hir een an whuspers:  
“Hae ye no thocht whaur ye nicht finnd  
sum cosie place for ti byde the nicht?  
Frae the Ceitie waws ye maun hae heard  
the signal for the third nicht watch?  
The freist wul be dour an slippy ootby,  
the streets desertit. Wad it no be wyce  
for ti byde .....or the morn’s mornin?”*

*PROCRASTINATION*

*She peels fresh oranges for her lover  
using a knife that has a watery gleam.  
Raising her eyes to his, she offers him  
a reed-pipe and puts one to her own lips.  
Together they play, the notes dying down  
into the scented haze from the incense burner.  
She drops her eyes and whispers:  
“Have you not thought where you might  
find some cosie place to stay the night?  
From the City walls you must have heard  
The signal for the third night watch?  
The frost will be hard and slippery outside,  
The streets deserted. Would it not be wise  
to stay .....until tomorrow morning?”*



Li Ch'ing Chao (1082-1144)

KEIKIN GLESS

*Year eftir year Ah hae watcht  
ma keikin gless. But nou ma rouge  
an creams skunner me. Ae mair  
year at he haesna cum back!  
Ma flesh trummils whan a letter  
cums frae the South o the River.  
Ah canna drink wyne sen he gaed,  
but the Faw haes drakkit ma tears.  
Ah hae tint ma mynd, ferr awa  
in the jungle rouks o the South,  
an the yetts o Heivin ir nearer nou  
a whein, nor the bodie o ma man.*

LOOKING GLASS

*Year after year I have watched  
my looking glass, but now my rouge  
and face creams disgust me. One more  
year that he has not returned.  
My body trembles when a letter  
arrives from South of the River.  
I cannot drink wine since he left,  
but the Autumn has dried up my tears.  
My mind is lost now far away  
in the jungle fogs of the South,  
and the gates of Heaven are nearer now  
than the body of my beloved man.*

A WUMMAN IN MURNIN

*Seekin, fouterin, wi ma frozen hert,  
a fauss close spell turns ti cauld again,  
wi caups o wyne at dawin, the'r nae end  
til the wund, whyle the wyld geese abuin,  
Ah uised ti send in days bygaen, ti cairrie  
messages o luiv til ma guidman,  
hae tint thair meanin awthegither nou,*

*In the gairdens, wuthert chrysants  
haes cuist a fauch lyke shroud.  
Wha wul ever pick onie flouer for me?  
Ah hing oot owre the bare winnok,  
waitin on the dreidit nicht ti faw.  
On the pagoda the smirr o rain gethers  
inti draps that dreip down in the gloamin.  
Gin this is murnin, ower mukkil's here  
for me ti thole—or comprehend!*

**Li Ch'ing Chao (1082-1144)**

*A WOMAN IN MOURNING*

*Seeking, fumbling with my frozen heart,  
A false mild spell turns to cold again,  
with cups of wine at dawn, there's no end  
to the wind, while the wild geese above  
I used to send in days bygone to carry  
my messages of love to my goodman,  
have lost their meaning altogether now.*

*In the gardens, withered chrysanthemums  
have cast a dullish shroud on everything.  
Who will ever pick any flower for me now?  
I hang out over the bare window,  
waiting for the dreaded night to fall.  
On the pagoda the small rain gathers  
into drops that fall down in the dusk.  
If this is mourning, too much is here  
to be endured---or comprehend!*

**Ch'en Yu Yi (1090-1138)**

*SPRING MORN*

*Ai Mercie, here the dawin!  
The blyth burds lilt in the yaird,  
An Spring owerhails the wuids  
wi bricht flouers. Aw at aince  
a lousum poem kyths afore me.  
But whan Ah try ti claucht it  
in the wab o ma ain leid,  
lyke a flichtermouss i the derk,  
it jooks awa intil Eternitie,  
sae that Ah canna finnd it  
oniewhaur, oniewey at aw.*

*SPRING MORNING*

*My, here is the dawn again!  
The blyth birds sing in the yard  
and Spring overwhelms the woods  
with bright flowers. All at once  
a lovely poem appears before me.  
But when I try to embrace it  
in the web of my own tongue,  
like a fluttering bat in the dark,  
it jinks away back into Eternity,  
so that I cannot find it again  
anywhere, any way at all.*

Lu Yu (1125-1209)

A DAUNER AT NICHT

*The muin is that hie, it is  
amaist inti the Plou.  
Ah walk oot the Ceitie  
alang the gait ti the Wast.  
The damp wund bumfils ma coat.  
The dewie gress drouks ma sandals.  
Fishermen ir singin awa,  
blyth lyke, on the ferr wattir.  
Tods lowp on the connacht lairs.  
A snell wund gethers an fills  
me wi dowiness. Ah try for  
ti think on the richt wurd  
ti claucht this unco lanesumness.  
Ah stodge hame late. The nicht  
is nou hauf duin. Ah staun for  
a lang whyle bi the hous door.  
Ma wee son is aye up, readin.  
Aw at aince, he bursts oot lauchin,  
an aw the birn o dule o the  
gloamin o ma lyfe haes flaen awa,  
lyke winnelstrae afore the wund.*

BLYTH DAYS

*Aince we haed a chapper  
hingin on the front yett.  
Nou we haurlie open it,  
but Ah dinna want fowk  
skliffin up the green fug.  
The sun growes warm lyke.  
Spring haes fair cum at lest.  
Whyles ye can juist hear,  
cairrit on the lown saur,  
the dirdum o the street.  
Ma guidwyfe reads the clessics.  
She speirs at me the meanin  
o the auld characters.  
Ma son fleitches for a sowp wyne.  
He gollops doun the haill cappie  
afore Ah can richt stap him.  
Ir the oniething ava better,  
nor a wawed gairden,  
wi yallae an purpie ploums  
plantit tyme about?*

A WALK AT NIGHT

*The moon is so high, it is  
nearly into the Plough  
I walk outside the City  
by the road to the West.  
The moist wind ruffles my coat.  
The dewie grass wets my sandals.  
I hear fishermen singing,  
happily on the far river.  
Foxes leap on the spoiled graves.  
A cold wind gathers and fills  
me with sadness. I try  
to think of the right words  
to catch this strange loneliness.  
I plod home late. The night  
has now half gone. I stand for  
a while before the house door.  
My young son is still awake, reading.  
All at once, he bursts out laughing,  
and all the weight of woe of the  
decline of my life at once flies away  
like straw driven before the wind.*

HAPPY DAYS

*Once we had a knocker  
hanging on the front door.  
Now we hardly open it,  
but I don't want people  
disturbing the green moss.  
The sun growes a little warmer.  
Spring has surely come at last.  
At times you can just hear,  
carried on the quiet breeze,  
the noise of the street.  
My wife reads the classics.  
She asks me the meaning  
of the ancient characters.  
My son begs for a taste of wine.  
but he gulps down the whole cup  
before I can stop him.  
What on earth could be  
better than a walled garden,  
with yellow and purple plums  
planted time about?*

Lu Yu (1125-1209)

FORENIGHT I THE CLACHAN

*Here i the heich Clachan  
the forenicht faws lichtsum.  
Hauf fou, Ah slounge bi the  
houss door. The muin leims in the  
gloamin lift. The breeze is that  
douce, the wattir is haulrie  
lippert. Ah hae wun free frae  
lees an mishanter. Ah im nou  
nae langir o onie importance.  
Ah never want ma brankin naigs  
an rummlin chairiots. At hame  
Ah hae rowth o pigs an hens.*

LEAVIN THE MONASTERY

*In ma sleepin bed, Ah dream.  
It seems Ah im a butterflie.  
A crawin cock waukens me  
lyke a skelp. The sun cums up  
the lest tyme atwein thae bens,  
an mist haps the distant craigs.  
Ma lang retreat is ower  
an ma worries growe again.  
Lauchin monks ir getherin  
brainches o braw peach blossoms  
for a fareweill myndin for me.  
But ma stirrup cup wul cheer me  
on ma lang traivil back  
til the dule of the warld  
intil a warld o truibils.*

RAIN ON THE WATTIR

*In the blindd haar we drift here  
an thare owre the derk swaws.  
At lest, oor wee boat finnds  
a beild anaith a sauchie bank.  
At midnicht Ah im waukrif,  
fair fou wi the wyne. The reikie  
lenten is foraye smouderin.  
The smaw rain is souchin aye  
i the theikit ruif o the boat caibin.*

VILLAGE EVENING

*Here in the high village  
The evening falls quietly.  
Half drunk, I lounge by the door  
of the house. The moon shines in the  
gloaming sky. The breeze is so  
gentle, the water is hardly  
disturbed. I have wun free  
from lies and misfortune. And now  
I'm no longer of any importance.  
I never miss my prancing horses  
and rumbling chariots. At home  
I have plenty of chickens and pigs.*

LEAVING THE MONASTERY

*In my sleeping bed, I dream  
It seems I am a butterfly.  
A cock crows and wakes me  
like a slap. The sun comes up  
the last time between those hills,  
And mist covers the distant crags.  
My long retreat is now over  
and my worries start up again.  
Laughing monks are gathering  
branches of fine peach blossoms  
for a parting gift for me.  
But no stirrup cup will cheer me  
on my long journey back  
to the sorrow o the world--  
into a world of troubles.*

RAIN ON THE WATER

*In the blind fog we drift here  
and there over the dark waves.  
At last our little boat finds  
shelter beneath a willow tree.  
At midnight I am wakeful,  
quite tipsy with the wine. The smoky  
lantern keeps smouldering on.  
The snall, rain is sighs always  
in the thatched roof of the boat's cabin*

Lu Yu (1125-1309)

THE COURTESAN

*Pink an whyte haunds lik roses!  
Caups fou wi gowden puils o wyne!  
The-day the sauchs ir in blossom  
bi the Pailace waw. The Spring wund  
brings me nae pleisir, an Ah hate  
it nou. Ma intimmers is fair  
cruppen wi bitterness. Ah canna  
lowse the ticht cord o the years  
that haes bund us baith thegither.  
The Spring is aye the Spring  
o ither days, but nou Ah im tuim  
an wuzzent wi pyne an dule.  
Ma rouge is aw fair begrutten  
an ma gown is smirdit wi ma tears.  
The peach trees ir in flouer again  
abuin ma chaumer here, bi the lown  
lochan at mirrors the mukkil bens.  
Ah nae langir hae the smeddum  
for ti feinish this bit skreid  
an rowe it in the gowden claith.  
Whan it is in yeir haund, awthing  
wul be aw by an duin, foraye.*

THE COURTESAN

*Pink and white hands like rose petals!  
Glasses filled with golden pools of wine.  
Today the willow trees are in bloom  
by the Palace wall. The Spring wind  
brings me no pleasure, and I hate  
it now. My insides are knotted  
with bitterness. I cannot loosen  
the tight cord of the years  
that has tied us both together.  
The Spring is always the Spring  
as before, but now I am hollow  
and wizened with pain an sorrow.  
My rouge is streaked on my face  
and my gown smeared with tears.  
The peach trees are in flower again  
above my room here, bi the still  
lake, which mirrors the mountains.  
I no longer have the heart  
to put an end to this letter  
and roll it in the cloth of gold.  
When it's in your hand, everything  
will be all by and done now, forever.*

Comment [D1]:

**Lu Yu (1125-1209)**

*THE WYLD FLOUER MAN*

*Div ee ken thon auld caird that  
sells the flouers bi the South Yett?  
He fair leeves on flouers lik a bee.  
In the forenuin he sells mallaes;  
In the forenicht, he haes poppies.  
His shantie ruif lets in the blue lift.  
His rice girnal is aye tuim.  
Whan he haes ingethert aneuch siller  
frae flouers, he heids for a tea-houss.  
Whan his siller is gaen, he  
gethers mair flouers. Aw throu  
the Spring wather, whyle the  
flouers ir in bloom, he is lyke  
in bloom, tae. Ilka day he is  
fou the haill tyme. Whit dis  
he care gin new laws ir posted  
at the Emperor's pailace?  
Whit dis it maitter ti him  
gin the government is biggit  
on sand? An ye mak ti speak  
til him, he winna aansir; but  
onlie gie ye a drukken smirtil  
frae ablo his tousilt heid.*

*THE WILD FLOWER MAN*

*Do you know that old man who  
sells flowers by the South Gate?  
He seems to live on flowers like a bee.  
In the morning he sells mallows;  
In the evening he sells poppies.  
The roof of his hut lets in the blue sky.  
His rice store is always empty.  
When he has gathered enough money  
from flowers, he heads for a tea-house.  
When his money is gone, he  
gathers more flowers. All through  
the Spring weather, while the  
flowers are in bloom, he is  
blooming as well. Every day he is  
drunk the whole time. What does  
he care if new laws are posted  
At the Emperor's palace?  
Does it matter to him that  
the government is founded  
on sand? If you try to speak  
to him, he will not answer; but  
only give you a drunken smirk  
From below his tousled head.*

**Chu Hsi (1130-1200)**

*THE BOATS FLOAT*

*Yestrein along the river banks  
the fluids o Spring haes risen.  
Gret warships an mukkil bairges  
float along as licht as feathers.  
Afore, naething coud shift thaim  
frae the glaur. The-day thay snuve  
easylyke in the fest current*

*THE BOATS FLOAT*

*Last night along the river banks  
The Spring floods have risen.  
Huge warships and great barges  
float a.long as light as feathers.  
Before, nothing could shift them  
from the mud. Today they glide  
easily in the fast current.*

Hsin Ch'i-chi (1140-1207)

DAUNER TI HUANGSHA

Midnight--a leim frae the muin  
glifs the pyot frae the spaik,  
a caller souch steirs the chirkers  
inti sang an whuffs o douce parfume  
skails frae the breirdin paddy hauchs.  
The craiks frae merdils o countless  
threipin puddoks deives the nicht air.

Juist the seivin or echt sterns  
skinkils in the lift abuin;  
twae-thrie raindraps, nae mair,  
splatters on the brae face,  
afore a sudden blatter---  
a simmer dounpour sterts,  
garrin me breinge for beild:  
an auld weill-kent den o mynes!

Ah rin for the burn, win ower the brig,  
an aw at aince, asyde the wuiden chaipel,  
Ah see the yill-houss wi its theikit ruif.  
Ma een ir filled wi maimories lik wyne.

HAME I THE CLACHAN

Laich, laich ower nairrae easins  
hings the lousumness o thatch  
an shallae streams ir daibelt  
emerant wi gress. An syne.....  
a dwaumie burr Ah hear:  
twa tungs frae the South!  
Wha dae thay belang til?  
Aha, thon auld couple  
yammerin awa in the shade.  
Hou divertin this is!  
On the ferr bank the burn,  
ma auldest son lamps  
aw ower the pea-riggs,  
howein awa at the weeds.  
His brither plaits a hen coup,  
an ma yungest lyke laddie,  
aye sae guid at finndin nocht  
ti dae, liggs speldert bi the wal,  
splittin the lotus pods  
aye in his ain tyme.

STROLL TO HUANGSHA

Midnight, a beam from the moon  
starts a magpie from his perch,  
a cool breeze stirs the chirpers  
into song and whiffs of sweet perfume  
spills from blossoming paddy fields.  
The croaks from from countless  
insistent frogs fill the night air.

Juist seven o eight stars  
twinkle in the sky above;  
two-three raindrops, no more,  
spatter on the hill face,  
before a sudden shower---  
a summer dounpour starts  
making me charge for shelter:  
an old well-known den of mine!

I run for the burn, win over the bridge,  
and all at once, beside the old chapel,  
I see the ale-house with its thatched roof!  
My eyes fill with memories like wine

HOME IN THE VILLAGE

Low, low over narrow eaves  
hangs the beauty of thatch  
and shallow streams are dabbled  
emerald with grass. And then.....  
a dreamy burr I hear:  
two tongues from the South!  
Who do they belong to?  
Aha, that old couple  
chattering in the shade!  
How diverting this is!  
On the far bank of the stream,  
my oldest son strides  
all over the pea fields,  
hoeing away at the weeds.  
His brother plaits a hen coup,  
and my youngest lad,  
always happy with little,  
to do, lies spread by the well  
splitting the lotus pods,  
always in his own time.

**Chu Shu Chen** (ca. 1200)

*TINT*

*Lest year at the Lantern Festival  
the flouer buiths war bricht as day.  
Whan the muin rase ower the sauchs.  
Ah daunert in the muinlicht wi ma jo.  
Anither year – the same festival –  
the muin an lanterns haena chynged,  
but ma man is tint, Ah canna finnd him,  
an Ah dicht awa tears wi ma sleeve.*

*LOST*

*Last year at the Lantern Festival  
the flower booths were bright as day.  
When the moon rose over the willows.  
I strolled in the moonlight with my love.  
Another year – the same festival --  
the moon and lanterns are the same,  
but my man is lost, I cannot find him,  
and I wipe away tears with my sleeve.*

*MA MORNIN*

*Ah ryse up. Ah im that seik  
o rougin ma chowks. Ma gizz  
in the gless fair gies me the bowk.  
Ma shilpit shouthers ir boued down  
wi howplessness. Tears o lanesumness  
wals in ma een. Wearilie lyke,  
aince mair, Ah hirpil til ma dresser.  
Ah airch an pent ma eebrous  
an steam ma heavy plets.  
Ma maid is that donnert, she offers  
me ploum blossoms\* for ma heid!*

*MY MORNING*

*I rise up. I am so sick  
of rouging my cheeks. My face  
in the glass disgusts me.  
My skinny shoulders are bowed down  
with despair. Tears of loneliness  
well in my eyes. Wearily,  
once more. I hobble to my dresser.  
I arch and paint my eyebrows  
and steam my heavy plaits.  
My maid is so stupid, she offers  
me plum blossoms for my head!*

*\*A preparation for sexual adventure*

**Kso Jui-shiuan** (13<sup>th</sup> Century)

*CHING MING SPLORE*

*The knowes til the North an South ir fou o lairs  
an at Ching Ming, the leevin ir thrang anaw,  
haiglin thair praisents til thair forbeir's lairs.  
lik butterflies the joss-paper auss flies by,  
an reid azaleas dreip as bairnies greit.  
But eftir sundown, the lairs ir lowries' dens  
aince mair. The bairns, gaun hame, lauch,  
i the lantern licht. Man, wul Ah no git fou  
the-nicht, an aw the nichts as lang's Ah leeve,  
for nou it's shuirleie clear aneuch ti me  
the neist drap guid strang whusky  
thay pour in the eftir warld, wul be the first!*



**Kso Jui-shiuan** (13th Century)

*CHING MING FESTIVAL*

*The mounds to the North and South are full of tombs  
and at Ching Ming, the living are crowded as well,  
carrying presents to the graves of their ancestors.  
Like butterflies, joss-paper ashflies by,  
and red azaleas drop as children weep.  
But after sundown, the graves are foxes' dens  
once more. The children going home,  
Laugh in the lantern light. Man, will I not get full  
tonight, and all the nights as long as I live?  
For now it's surely clear enough to me,  
the next good drop of good strong whisky  
they pour in the after world, will be the first!*

**Chang Kuo Fan** (19<sup>th</sup> Century)

*THERTIE-THRIE THE-DAY*

*Mair as thertie year haes stoured  
by me lik a rinawa chariot.  
In siclyke wey Ah hae spent  
ma lyfe, breingin here an thare  
frae ae end the kinrik til tither.  
Nou Ah grein for the steid  
Ah wes born, ten thousan bens awa.  
Lik the runkilt yallae leafs  
at the Simmer's end, a whein  
whyte hairs haes kythed  
areddies on ma heid. An aw  
ma traivel haes duin nae mair  
nor sklif the driftin sand.  
Ah gethert leir lik a snaw baw  
Ah sklum gret craigs. Ah passed exems  
an blethert lairnit lecters  
at fowk daft aneuch ti heed me.  
But whit did Ah gain at aw?  
Better haed Ah bidden at hame  
for ti growe the prize melons.*

*THERTY-THREE TODAY*

*More than thirty years have sped  
by me like a runaway chariot.  
In such a way, I've spent  
my life, charging here and there  
from one end of the land to the other.  
Now I long for the place where  
I was born, ten thousand hills away.  
Like the wrinkled yellow leaves  
at Summer's end, a few  
white hairs have now appeared  
already on my head. And all  
my travels have done no more  
than brush the drifting sand.  
I gathered gear like a snowball.  
I climbed mountains. I passed exams  
and gave learned lectures  
at folk daft enough to heed me.  
But what did I gain at all?  
Better had I stayed at home  
to grow prize melons.*

## GLOSSARY

This glossary is intended to be no more than an aid to readers unfamiliar with the Scots language. The Scots spellings used are in accordance with the guidelines published by the Scots Language Society in 1985 for Scots orthography. In general, these spellings avoid many of the anomalies associated with English orthography and give useful guidance to the pronunciation of Scots words. The equivalent meaning given in English, represents the appropriate meaning in the text. Many of the Scots words covered have several other meanings, or synonyms, and these may be found in the Concise Scots Dictionary (Aberdeen University Press, 1985) or in the Scottish National Dictionary.

*ablo*, prep, away  
*about*, adv, about  
*abuin*, prep, above  
*ae*, a, one  
*aerlie*, adv, early  
*aferr*, adv, afar  
*afore*, adv, before  
*Ah*, pron, I  
*aheid*, adv, ahead  
*ahint*, prep, behind  
*Ai*, interj, Oh  
*ain*, a, own  
*aince*, adv, once  
*airmor*, n, armor  
*airn*, n, iron  
*airt*, n, art, direction  
*aistern*, a, east  
*aistlin*, a, easterly  
*alang*, prep, along  
*altho*, c, *although*  
*amaist*, adv, almost  
*amang*, prep, among  
*an*, c, and  
*anaith*, prep, beneath  
*anaw*, adv, also  
*ane*, a, one  
*anelie*, a, only  
*aneuch*, a, enough  
*anither*, a, another  
*areddies*, adv, already  
*athout(en)*, prep, without  
*atwein*, prep, between  
*auld*, a, old  
*aunsir*, n, answer  
*ava*, adv, at all

*aw*, a, all  
*awa*, a, away  
*awauken*, v, awaken  
*awthegither*, adv, altogether  
*awthing*, n, everything  
*aye*, adv, always  
*ayebydinlie*, adv, eternally  
*ayelestin*, a, everlasting

*bade*, v, dwelled  
*banes*, n, bones  
*bangstar*, n, bully  
*bairn*, n, child  
*barefuit*, a, barefoot  
*bauchil*, v, distort  
*beb*, v, drink  
*becum*, v, become  
*bedein*, adv, suddenly  
*befaw*, v, befall  
*beglaumert*, a, enchanted  
*begowk*, v, deceive  
*begrutten*, a, tear-stained  
*behauden*, a, beholden  
*beild*, n, v, shelter  
*beir*, v, bear  
*beirial*, n, burial  
*beiss*, n, animals  
*belanged*, v, belonged  
*ben*, prep, in  
*bens*, n, mountains  
*bern*, n, barn  
*bewtie*, n, beauty  
*bi*, prep, by  
*biggin*, n, building  
*birl*, v, rotate

*biggit*, v, built  
*birk*, n, birch  
*birkenshaw*, n, group of birches  
*birn*, n, burden  
*birze*, v, press  
*blatter*, v, rattle  
*blaw*, v, blow  
*blek*, a, black  
*blether*, v, chatter  
*bluim*, v, bloom  
*blyth*, a, happy  
*bodach*, n, old man  
*bogil*, n, scarecrow  
*bonnie*, a, beautiful  
*bou*, v, n, bow  
*bowk*, v, retch  
*braes*, n, slopes  
*raid*, a, broad  
*brainches*, n, branches  
*braw*, a, fine  
*breinge*, v, charge  
*breird*, v, sprout  
*brek*, v, break  
*bricht*, a, bright  
*brig*, n, bridge  
*brither*, n, brother  
*brocht*, v, brought  
*brou*, n, brow  
*brukken*, v, broken  
*brunt*, v, burnt  
*buith*, n, booth  
*bumfil*, v, pucker  
*bund*, v, bound  
*byde*, v, stay  
*byde-ower*, n, sojourn  
*bygaen*, n, bygone

*caibin*, n, cabin  
*caird*, n, old man  
*cairriage*, n, carriage  
*cairt*, n, cart  
*caller*, a, fresh  
*cam*, v, came  
*canna*, v, cannot  
*cauld*, a, cold  
*caw*, v, call, drive  
*ceitie*, n, city

*chairiot*, n, chariot  
*chapper*, n, knocker  
*chaumer*, n, chamber  
*cheil*, n, fellow  
*chirker*, n, cricket  
*chitter*, v, shiver  
*chowks*, n,  
*clachan*, n, village  
*claes*, n, clothes  
*claith*, n, cloth  
*clash*, v, throw  
*claucht*, v, clutch  
*cleid*, v, clad  
*cled*, v, clad  
*cleuch*, n, glen  
*connach*, v, spoil  
*coorse*, a, wild  
*craig*, n, crag  
*craik*, v, croak  
*crammasie*, a, crimson  
*cran*, n, crane  
*craw*, n, crow  
*croun*, n, crown  
*cruppen*, a, shrivelled  
*cuil*, v, cool  
*cuist*, v, cast  
*cuiver*, v, cover  
*cum*, v, come

*dae*, v, do  
*daibil*, v, dabble  
*daith*, n, death  
*darg*, v, toil  
*dauner*, v, wander  
*daunert*, v, wandered  
*dawin*, n, dawn  
*dee*, v, die  
*deid*, a, dead  
*deive*, v, deafen  
*denner*, n, dinner  
*deskrive*, v, describe  
*dicht*, v, wipe  
*didna*, v, did not  
*dirdum*, n, noise  
*dirl*, v, vibrate  
*div*, v, do  
*douce*, a, soft

*doun*, prep, down  
*dout*, v, n, doubt  
*dowf*, a, sad  
*dowie*, a, sad  
*drak*, v, soak up  
*dreid*, n, dread  
*dreip*, n, v, drip  
*drog*, n, drug  
*droukit*, a, drenched  
*drouth*, n, thirst  
*drukken*, a, drunken  
*duds*, n, rags  
*dug*, n, dog  
*duin*, v, done  
*dule*, n, sorrow  
*dulesum* adv, sorrowfully  
*dung*, v, broke  
*dwaiblie*, a, feeble  
*dwaumie*, a, dreary  
*dwyne*, v, dwindle

*easin*, n, horizon  
*echt*, a, eight  
*eebrou*, n, eyebrow  
*efir*, prep, after  
*efirnuin*, n, afternoon  
*esp*, n, asp  
*ettil*, v, intend  
*exem*, n, examination  
*eydent*, a, industrious

*faimlie*, n, family  
*fain*, v, like to  
*fareweill*, n, farewell  
*fash*, v, worry  
*fashiuss*, a, irritating  
*fae*, n, foe  
*faither*, n, father  
*fauch*, a, feeble  
*faw*, v, n, fall, autumn  
*fearthlyke*, a, frightened  
*fere*, n, companion  
*ferm*, n, farm  
*ferr*, a, far  
*finnd*, v, find  
*fleitch*, v, implore  
*flichter*, v, flutter  
*flichtermouss*, n, bat

*flower*, n, flower  
*fluid*, n, flood  
*fluit*, n, flute  
*flyte*, v, scold  
*follae*, v, follow  
*foraye*, adv, forever  
*forby*, adv, also  
*forebeir*, n, ancestor  
*forenuin*, n, forenoon  
*forenicht*, n, evening  
*forgether*, v, assemble  
*forritsum*, a, forward  
*fortuin*, n, fortune  
*fou*, a, full  
*fouter*, v, fuss  
*fouzilt*, a, confused  
*fower*, a, four  
*fowk*, n, people  
*frae*, prep, from  
*frein*, n, friend  
*freist*, n, frost  
*fuit*, n, foot  
*fund*, v, found  
*fyle*, v, defile

*gae*, v, go  
*gaed*, v, went  
*gaen*, v, gone  
*gairden*, n, garden  
*gait*, n, way  
*gang*, v, go  
*gar*, v, compel  
*gether*, v, collect  
*gin*, c, if  
*girn*, v, complain  
*girnal*, n, grain store  
*git*, v, get  
*gizz*, n, face  
*glaur*, n, mud  
*gledge*, n, v, glance sideways  
*glent*, n, gleam  
*gless*, n, glass  
*glif*, v, scare  
*glisk*, n, glance  
*gloamin*, n, dusk  
*goave*, v, stare  
*goun*, n, gown  
*gowd*, a, gold

*glower*, v, glare  
*gollop*, v, gulp  
*graaff-yaird*, n, graveyard  
*graithead*, v, equipped  
*greinin*, n, longing  
*greit*, v, weep  
*gress*, n, grass  
*gret*, a, great  
*growe*, v, grow  
*gruesum*, a, disgusting  
*grund*, n, ground  
*grundhouss*, n, cellar  
*guid*, adj, good  
*guidsister*, n, sister-in-law  
*guidwyfe*, n, housewife  
*guiss*, n, goose

*haar*, n, sea mist  
*hae*, v, have  
*haep*, v, n, heap  
*haffets*, n, temples  
*haigil*, v, carry with difficulty  
*haill*, a, whole  
*hain*, v, conserve  
*hame*, n, home  
*hansil*, v, inaugurate  
*hap*, n, v, cover  
*hantil*, a, many  
*hauch*, n, low field  
*haud*, v, hold  
*haurlie*, adv, hardly  
*haw*, n, hall  
*heich*, a, high  
*heid*, n, head  
*heidmaist*, a, foremost  
*heivin*, n, heaven  
*hert*, n, heart  
*hicht*, n, height  
*hie*, a, high  
*himlane*, pron, himself  
*hing*, v, hang  
*hinner*, a, final  
*hir*, pron, her  
*hirpil*, v, hobble  
*hou*, adv, how  
*houss*, n, house  
*howe*, n, v, hoe  
*howk*, v, dig

*howp*, v, n, hope  
*hoy*, v, hurry  
*hunder*, n, a, hundred  
*hyne-awa*, adv, far away  
*hyst*, v, raise

*ilk*, a, each  
*ill*, a, difficult  
*im*, v, am  
*ingethert*, a, brought in  
*inti*, prep, into  
*intimmers*, n, internal organs  
*ir*, v, are  
*ither*, a, other

*jei*, n, joy  
*jo*, n, sweetheart  
*joug*, n, jug  
*jouk*, v, avoid  
*juist*, a, just

*kaim*, n, v, comb  
*keik*, v, peer  
*kelter*, v, undulate  
*ken*, v, know  
*kennawha*, n, anonymous  
*kenspekkil*, a, conspicuous  
*kinrik*, n, kingdom  
*kintrie*, n, country  
*kirstal*, a, n, crystal  
*kis*, c, because  
*kist*, n, chest  
*knowe*, n, hillock  
*kyth*, v, appear

*laich*, a, low  
*lair*, n, grave  
*lamp*, v, stride  
*lang*, a, long  
*langir*, a, longer  
*lanesum*, a, lonely  
*langsyne*, adv, long ago  
*lauch*, v, laugh  
*lave*, n, remainder  
*law*, n, hill  
*lecter*, n, lecture  
*ledder*, n, ladder  
*leddie*, n, lady

*leeve*, v, live  
*leim*, n, v, gleam  
*lentern*, n, lantern  
*leir*, n, learning  
*lichtsum*, a, joyful  
*lift*, n, sky  
*ligg*, v, lie  
*lik*, a, like  
*lilt*, v, sing  
*linn*, n, pool, waterfall  
*lippert*, a, disturbed  
*littil*, a, little  
*loun*, n, boy  
*lourd*, a, heavy  
*lousum*, a, lovable  
*lowe*, n, flame  
*lown*, a, calm  
*lowrie*, n, fox  
*lowp*, v, leap  
*lowse*, n, loosen  
*lowss*, a, loose  
*luik*, v, look  
*luiv*, n, love

*ma*, a, my  
*mair*, a, more  
*mairch*, v, march  
*mairrie*, v, marry  
*masell*, pron, myself  
*maumie*, a, ripe  
*maun*, v, must  
*meinit*, n, minute  
*mell*, v, mix  
*merdil*, n, crowd  
*micht*, n, might  
*midnacht*, n, midnight  
*mirk*, n, v, dark  
*mishanter*, n, misfortune  
*mither*, n, mother  
*monie*, a, many  
*mouls*, n, soil  
*muin*, n, moon  
*mukkil*, a, big  
*murner*, n, mourner  
*mynd*, v, remember  
*myndin*, n, remembrance

*nae*, a, no  
*naebodie*, n, nobody  
*naething*, n, nothing  
*nane*, pron, none  
*naither*, c, neither  
*nearhaund*, prep, nearby  
*neibor*, n, neighbor  
*neist*, a, next  
*neuk*, n, recess  
*nicht*, n, night  
*nicker*, v, neigh  
*nithert*, a, chilled  
*no*, adv, not  
*norlin*, n, northerly  
*nou*, adv, now

*o*, prep, of  
*oor*, n, hour  
*oorsells*, pron, ourselves  
*oot*, pron, out  
*outlin*, n, stranger  
*ower*, adv, too, over  
*owerhail*, v, overtake

*pad*, n, path  
*paerl*, m, pearl  
*pailace*, n, palace  
*pairt*, n, part  
*paitern*, n, pattern  
*peir*, n, pear  
*pikkil*, n, small quantity  
*pit-aff*, n, procrastinator  
*pleisir*, n, pleasure  
*plet*, v, plait  
*plou*, v, n, plow  
*ploum*, n, plum  
*pou*, v, pull  
*pou*, v, pull  
*praisent*, a, n, present  
*puddok*, n, frog  
*puil*, n, pool  
*pul*, v, pull  
*pyot*, n, magpie

*quut*, v, quit  
*quyne*, n, lass

*rair*, v, roar  
*randie*, a, wild  
*raw*, n, row  
*redd*, v, tidy  
*reik*, n, smoke  
*reishil* v, rustle  
*reist*, v, roost  
*riggs*, n, fields  
*rin*, v, run  
*rink*, v, surround  
*rouk*, v, fog  
*rowe*, v, roll  
*rowth*, n, abundance  
*ruif*, n, roof  
*rummil*, v, rumble

*sae*, adv, soul  
*saet*, n, seat  
*saft*, a, soft  
*sain*, v, bless  
*saitin*, n, satin  
*sanct*, n, saint  
*sant*, v, disappear  
*sauch*, n, willow  
*saucht*, n, peace  
*saul*, n, soul  
*saur*, n, breeze

*saut*, n, salt  
*saxteen*, a, sixteen  
*seik*, n, sick  
*seivin*, a, seven  
*seivinteen*, a, seventeen  
*sen*, adv, since  
*serr*, v, serve  
*shaw*, n, copse  
*shouther*, n, shoulder  
*shenachie*, n, bard  
*shilpit*, n, iil-thriven  
*shuin*, n, shoes  
*siccarnss*, n, certainty  
*sicht*, n, sight  
*siller*, n, money  
*simmer*, n, summer  
*sinder*, v, divide  
*singil*, a, single  
*skail*, v, empty  
*skelp*, n, v, slap  
*skelter*, v, rush

*skaum*, n, vapor  
*skiff*, v, brush  
*skinkil*, v, twinkle  
*skliff*, v, graze  
*sklim*, v, climb  
*sklum*, v, climbed  
*skowth*, n, scope  
*skreid*, n, letter  
*skreive*, v, write  
*skunner*, n, v, disgust  
*slokken*, v, quench  
*slounge*, v, loiter  
*smaw*, a, small  
*smeddum*, n, gumption  
*smird*, v, smudge  
*smirr*, n, small rain  
*smirtil*, n, smirk  
*smouder*, v, smoulder  
*snaw*, n, snow  
*snell*, a, cold  
*snuive*, v, glide  
*souch*, n, sigh  
*soud*, v, should  
*souk*, v, suck  
*soum*, v, n, swim  
*soup*, v, sweep  
*sowp*, v, sup  
*spak*, v, spoke  
*spaik*, n, spar  
*speir*, v, enquire  
*sperfil*, v, scatter  
*splore*, n, celebration  
*stap*, v, stop  
*stane*, n, stone  
*staun*, v, stand  
*staw*, n, stall  
*steid*, n, place  
*steidin*, n, dwelling  
*steik*, v, shut  
*steir*, v, stir, move  
*stern*, n, star  
*stert*, v, start  
*stey*, v, stay  
*stodge*, v, stump  
*stoiter*, v, stagger  
*stour*, n, dust  
*stramp*, v, tramp  
*strecht*, a, straight  
*streik*, v, stretch

*suin*, adv, soon  
*swaw*, n, swell  
*sweil*, v, circulate  
*sweir*, a, reluctant  
*swurl*, v, swirl  
*suiden*, a, sudden  
*synd*, v, rinse  
*syne*, adv, then

*taigil*, n, burden  
*taiken*, n, token  
*tak*, v, take  
*tane*, pron, one  
*tapcoat*, n, overcoat  
*teim*, v, pour down  
*thay*, pron, they  
*thaim*, pron, them  
*thair*, a, their  
*thare*, adv, there  
*the-day*, adv, today  
*thegither*, adv, together  
*theikit*, a, thatched  
*the-morn*, adv, tomorrow  
*the-nicht*, adv, tonight  
*the`r*, v, there is  
*thir*, a, these  
*thirldom*, n, servitude  
*thole*, v, endure  
*thon*, a, that  
*thousan*, a, n, thousand  
*thrang*, a, busy  
*thrissil*, n, thistle  
*throu*, prep, through  
*ti*, prep, to  
*til*, prep, to  
*timmer*, a, timber  
*tint*, a, lost  
*tither*, a, other  
*toun*, n, town  
*traivel*, v, journey  
*traivlar*, n, traveler  
*trauchilt*, v, oppressed  
*truibil*, n, trouble  
*trummil*, v, tremble  
*tuim*, a, empty  
*tuin*, n, tune  
*twantie*, a, twenty  
*twa(e)*, a, two

*ugsum*, a, ugly  
*uise*, v, use  
*unco*, a, strange  
*unner*, prep, under  
*unnerstaun*, v, understand

*wab*, n, web  
*wad*, v, would, wed  
*wal*, n, well  
*walcum* n, welcome  
*war*, v, were  
*warld*, n, world  
*wastlin*, a, westerly  
*wattir*, n, water  
*waucht*, v, quaff  
*wauken*, v, waken  
*waukrif*, a, wakeful  
*waw*, n, wall  
*wede*, v, vanish  
*weill*, adv, well  
*weir*, v, wear  
*wes*, v, was  
*wha*, pron, who  
*whas*, pron, whose  
*whan*, adv, when  
*whaur*, adv, where  
*whein*, a, few  
*wheipil*, v, whistle  
*whit*, pron, what  
*whusper*, v, whisper  
*whuff*, n, scent  
*whyles*, adv, sometimes  
*wi*, prep, with  
*winnelstrae*, n, witheredgrass  
*winnok*, n, window  
*wuiden*, a, wooden  
*wuids*, n, woods  
*wul*, v, will  
*wumman*, n, woman  
*wunds*, n, winds  
*wunter*, n, winter  
*wuzzent*, a, withered

*yallae*, a, yellow  
*yammer*, v, chatter, lament  
*ye*, pron, you  
*yeir*, a, your  
*yestrein*, adv, yesterday  
*yett*, n, gate



*yett*, n, gate  
*yill*, n, ale  
*yin*, n, one

*yird*, a, earth  
*yung*, a, young  
*yungir*, a, younger