

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Li Bai**  
**- poems -**

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# Li Bai()

## A Bitter Love

How beautiful she looks, opening the pearly casement,  
And how quiet she leans, and how troubled her brow is!  
You may see the tears now, bright on her cheek,  
But not the man she so bitterly loves.

Li Bai

## A Farewell To A Friend

With a blue line of mountains north of the wall,  
And east of the city a white curve of water,  
Here you must leave me and drift away  
Like a loosened water-plant hundreds of miles....  
I shall think of you in a floating cloud;  
So in the sunset think of me.  
...We wave our hands to say good-bye,  
And my horse is neighing again and again.

Li Bai

# A Farewell To Meng Haoran On His Way To Yangzhou

You have left me behind, old friend, at the Yellow Crane Terrace,  
On your way to visit Yangzhou in the misty month of flowers;  
Your sail, a single shadow, becomes one with the blue sky,  
Till now I see only the river, on its way to heaven.

Li Bai

# A Farewell To Secretary Shuyun At The Xietiao Villa In Xuanzhou

Since yesterday had to throw me and bolt,  
Today has hurt my heart even more.  
The autumn wildgeese have a long wind for escort  
As I face them from this villa, drinking my wine.  
The bones of great writers are your brushes, in the School of Heaven,  
And I am a Lesser Xie growing up by your side.  
We both are exalted to distant thought,  
Aspiring to the sky and the bright moon.  
But since water still flows, though we cut it with our swords,  
And sorrows return, though we drown them with wine,  
Since the world can in no way answer our craving,  
I will loosen my hair tomorrow and take to a fishingboat.

Li Bai

## A Message To Meng Haoran

Master, I hail you from my heart,  
And your fame arisen to the skies....  
Renouncing in ruddy youth the importance of hat and chariot,  
You chose pine-trees and clouds; and now, whitehaired,  
Drunk with the moon, a sage of dreams,  
Flower- bewitched, you are deaf to the Emperor....  
High mountain, how I long to reach you,  
Breathing your sweetness even here!

Li Bai

# A Sigh From A Staircase Of Jade

Her jade-white staircase is cold with dew;  
Her silk soles are wet, she lingered there so long....  
Behind her closed casement, why is she still waiting,  
Watching through its crystal pane the glow of the autumn moon?

Li Bai

# A Song Of An Autumn Midnight

A slip of the moon hangs over the capital;  
Ten thousand washing-mallets are pounding;  
And the autumn wind is blowing my heart  
For ever and ever toward the Jade Pass....  
Oh, when will the Tartar troops be conquered,  
And my husband come back from the long campaign!

Li Bai

# A Song Of Changgan

My hair had hardly covered my forehead.  
I was picking flowers, paying by my door,  
When you, my lover, on a bamboo horse,  
Came trotting in circles and throwing green plums.  
We lived near together on a lane in Ch'ang-kan,  
Both of us young and happy-hearted.  
...At fourteen I became your wife,  
So bashful that I dared not smile,  
And I lowered my head toward a dark corner  
And would not turn to your thousand calls;  
But at fifteen I straightened my brows and laughed,  
Learning that no dust could ever seal our love,  
That even unto death I would await you by my post  
And would never lose heart in the tower of silent watching.  
...Then when I was sixteen, you left on a long journey  
Through the Gorges of Ch'u-t'ang, of rock and whirling water.  
And then came the Fifth-month, more than I could bear,  
And I tried to hear the monkeys in your lofty far-off sky.  
Your footprints by our door, where I had watched you go,  
Were hidden, every one of them, under green moss,  
Hidden under moss too deep to sweep away.  
And the first autumn wind added fallen leaves.  
And now, in the Eighth-month, yellowing butterflies  
Hover, two by two, in our west-garden grasses  
And, because of all this, my heart is breaking  
And I fear for my bright cheeks, lest they fade.  
...Oh, at last, when you return through the three Pa districts,  
Send me a message home ahead!  
And I will come and meet you and will never mind the distance,  
All the way to Chang-feng Sha.

Li Bai

# A Song Of Lu Mountain To Censor Lu Xuzhou

I am the madman of the Chu country  
Who sang a mad song disputing Confucius.  
...Holding in my hand a staff of green jade,  
I have crossed, since morning at the Yellow Crane Terrace,  
All five Holy Mountains, without a thought of distance,  
According to the one constant habit of my life.  
Lu Mountain stands beside the Southern Dipper  
In clouds reaching silken like a nine-panelled screen,  
With its shadows in a crystal lake deepening the green water.  
The Golden Gate opens into two mountain-ranges.  
A silver stream is hanging down to three stone bridges  
Within sight of the mighty Tripod Falls.  
Ledges of cliff and winding trails lead to blue sky  
And a flush of cloud in the morning sun,  
Whence no flight of birds could be blown into Wu.  
...I climb to the top. I survey the whole world.  
I see the long river that runs beyond return,  
Yellow clouds that winds have driven hundreds of miles  
And a snow-peak whitely circled by the swirl of a ninefold stream.  
And so I am singing a song of Lu Mountain,  
A song that is born of the breath of Lu Mountain.  
...Where the Stone Mirror makes the heart's purity purer  
And green moss has buried the footsteps of Xie,  
I have eaten the immortal pellet and, rid of the world's troubles,  
Before the lute's third playing have achieved my element.  
Far away I watch the angels riding coloured clouds  
Toward heaven's Jade City, with hibiscus in their hands.  
And so, when I have traversed the nine sections of the world,  
I will follow Saint Luao up the Great Purity.

Li Bai

# A Song Of Pure Happiness I

Her robe is a cloud, her face a flower;  
Her balcony, glimmering with the bright spring dew,  
Is either the tip of earth's Jade Mountain,  
Or a moon-edged roof of paradise

Li Bai

## A Song Of Pure Happiness II

There's a perfume stealing moist from a shaft of red blossom,  
And a mist, through the heart, from the magical Hill of Wu-  
The palaces of China have never known such beauty-  
Not even Flying Swallow with all her glittering garments

Li Bai

## A Song Of Pure Happiness Iii

Lovely now together, his lady and his flowers  
Lighten forever the Emperor's eye,  
As he listens to the sighing of the far spring wind  
Where she leans on a railing in the Aloe Pavilion

Li Bai

# Alone Looking At The Mountain

All the birds have flown up and gone;  
A lonely cloud floats leisurely by.  
We never tire of looking at each other -  
Only the mountain and I.

Li Bai

# Alone Looking At The Mountain

All the birds have flown up and gone;  
A lonely cloud floats leisurely by.  
We never tire of looking at each other  
Only the mountain and I.

Li Bai

# Amidst The Flowers A Jug Of Wine

Amidst the flowers a jug of wine,  
I pour alone lacking companionship.  
So raising the cup I invite the Moon,  
Then turn to my shadow which makes three of us.  
Because the Moon does not know how to drink,  
My shadow merely follows the movement of my body.  
The moon has brought the shadow to keep me company a while,  
The practice of mirth should keep pace with spring.  
I start a song and the moon begins to reel,  
I rise and dance and the shadow moves grotesquely.  
While I'm still conscious let's rejoice with one another,  
After I'm drunk let each one go his way.  
Let us bind ourselves for ever for passionless journeyings.  
Let us swear to meet again far in the Milky Way.

Li Bai

## Amusing Myself

Face wine not aware get dark  
Fall flower fill my clothes  
Drunk stand step stream moon  
Bird far person also few□  
Facing my wine, I did not see the dusk,  
Falling blossoms have filled the folds of my clothes.  
Drunk, I rise and approach the moon in the stream,  
Birds are far off, people too are few.

Li Bai

## Ancient Air (39)

Climb high gaze four seas  
Heaven earth how vast vast  
Frost blanket crowd thing autumn  
Wind blow big desert cold  
Magnificent east flow water  
10,000 thing all billow  
White sun cover elapse brilliance  
Float cloud without certain end  
Wutong nest swallow sparrow  
Thorn jujube perch yuan luan  
Moreover again return go come  
Sword sing travel road difficult□  
I climb up high and look on the four seas,  
Heaven and earth spreading out so far.  
Frost blankets all the stuff of autumn,  
The wind blows with the great desert's cold.  
The eastward-flowing water is immense,  
All the ten thousand things billow.  
The white sun's passing brightness fades,  
Floating clouds seem to have no end.  
Swallows and sparrows nest in the wutong tree,  
Yuan and luan birds perch among jujube thorns.  
Now it's time to head on back again,  
I flick my sword and sing Taking the Hard Road.

Li Bai

## Autumn Air

Autumn wind clear  
Autumn moon bright  
Fall leaves gather and scatter  
Jackdaw perch again startle  
Each think each see know what day  
This hour this night hard be feeling□  
The autumn air is clear,  
The autumn moon is bright.  
Fallen leaves gather and scatter,  
The jackdaw perches and starts anew.  
We think of each other- when will we meet?  
This hour, this night, my feelings are hard.

Li Bai

## Ballads Of Four Seasons: Spring

The lovely Lo Fo of the western land  
Plucks mulberry leaves by the waterside.  
Across the green boughs stretches out her white hand;  
In golden sunshine her rosy robe is dyed.  
'my silkworms are hungry, I cannot stay.  
Tarry not with your five-horse cab, I pray.'

Li Bai

## Ballads Of Four Seasons: Summer

On Mirror Lake outspread for miles and miles,  
The lotus lilies in full blossom teem.  
In fifth moon Xi Shi gathers them with smiles,  
Watchers o'erwhelm the bank of Yuoye Stream.  
Her boat turns back without waiting moonrise  
To yoyal house amid amorous sighs.

Li Bai

## Ballads Of Four Seasons: Winter

The courier will depart next day, she's told.  
She sews a warrior's gown all night.  
Her fingers feel the needle cold.  
How can she hold the scissors tight?  
The work is done, she sends it far away.  
When will it reach the town where warriors stay?

Li Bai

## Bidding A Friend Farewell At Jingmen Ferry

Sailing far off from Jingmen Ferry,  
Soon you will be with people in the south,  
Where the mountains end and the plains begin  
And the river winds through wilderness....  
The moon is lifted like a mirror,  
Sea-clouds gleam like palaces,  
And the water has brought you a touch of home  
To draw your boat three hundred miles.

Li Bai

# Bringing In The Wine

See how the Yellow River's waters move out of heaven.  
Entering the ocean, never to return.  
See how lovely locks in bright mirrors in high chambers,  
Though silken-black at morning, have changed by night to snow.  
...Oh, let a man of spirit venture where he pleases  
And never tip his golden cup empty toward the moon!  
Since heaven gave the talent, let it be employed!  
Spin a thousand pieces of silver, all of them come back!  
Cook a sheep, kill a cow, whet the appetite,  
And make me, of three hundred bowls, one long drink!  
...To the old master, Cen,  
And the young scholar, Danqiu,  
Bring in the wine!  
Let your cups never rest!  
Let me sing you a song!  
Let your ears attend!  
What are bell and drum, rare dishes and treasure?  
Let me be forever drunk and never come to reason!  
Sober men of olden days and sages are forgotten,  
And only the great drinkers are famous for all time.  
...Prince Chen paid at a banquet in the Palace of Perfection  
Ten thousand coins for a cask of wine, with many a laugh and quip.  
Why say, my host, that your money is gone?  
Go and buy wine and we'll drink it together!  
My flower-dappled horse,  
My furs worth a thousand,  
Hand them to the boy to exchange for good wine,  
And we'll drown away the woes of ten thousand generations!

Li Bai

# Changgan Memories

My hair first cover forehead  
Break flower gate before play  
You ride bamboo horse come  
Round walkway play green plums  
Together live Changgan county  
Two little without suspicion suspicion  
Fourteen become your wife  
Shy face still not open.  
Lower head face dark wall  
Thousand call not one turn  
Fifteen start open brow  
Wish together dust and ash  
Always maintain massive pillar faith  
Why climb look husband platform  
Sixteen you far go  
Qutang Yanyudui  
Fifth month not risk run aground  
Ape sound sky on sorrow  
Gate before back and forth mark  
One by one grow green moss  
Moss deep not able sweep  
Fall leaf autumn wind early  
Eighth month butterfly yellow  
Pair fly west garden grass  
Feel this hurt my heart  
Because sorrow red face old  
When descend Sanba  
Before do letter send home  
Mutual come to meet not say far  
Up to Changfengsha.□  
When first my hair began to cover my forehead,  
I picked and played with flowers before the gate.  
You came riding on a bamboo horse,  
And circled the walkway, playing with green plums.  
We lived together, here in Changgan county,  
Two children, without the least suspicion.  
When I was fourteen, I became your wife,  
So shy that still my face remained unopened.  
I bowed my head towards the shadowed wall,

And called one thousand times, I turned not once.  
At 15 I began to lift my brows,  
And wished to be with you as dust with ashes.  
You always kept your massive pillar faith,  
I had no need to climb the lookout hill.  
When I was sixteen, you went far away,  
To Yanyudui, within the Qutang gorge.  
You should not risk the dangerous floods of May,  
Now from the sky, the monkeys cry in mourning.  
Before the gate, my pacing's left a mark,  
Little by little, the green moss has grown.  
The moss is now too deep to sweep away,  
And leaves fall in the autumn's early winds.  
This August, all the butterflies are yellow,  
A pair fly over the western garden's grass.  
I feel that they are damaging my heart,  
Through worrying, my rosy face grows old.  
When you come down the river from Sanba,  
Beforehand, send a letter to your home.  
We'll go to meet each other, however far,  
I'll come up to Changfengsha.

Li Bai

# Conversation In The Mountains

You ask why I nestle in the green mountains.  
I laugh but answer not - my heart is serene.  
Peach blossoms and flowing waters go without a trace.  
There is another Heaven and Earth beyond the world of man.

Li Bai

# Crows Calling At Night

Yellow cloud wall beside crow near roost  
Return fly caw caw branch on call  
Machine in weave brocade Qin river girl  
Green yarn like mist separate window speech  
Stop shuttle disappointed recall far person  
Alone stay lone room tear like rain  
Yellow clouds beside the walls; crows roosting near.  
Flying back, they caw, caw; calling in the boughs.  
In the loom she weaves brocade, the Qin river girl.  
Made of emerald yarn like mist, the window hides her words.  
She stops the shuttle, sorrowful, and thinks of the distant man.  
She stays alone in the lonely room, her tears just like the rain.

Li Bai

# Down Zhongnan Mountain To The Kind Pillow And Bowl Of Husi

Down the blue mountain in the evening,  
Moonlight was my homeward escort.  
Looking back, I saw my path  
Lie in levels of deep shadow....  
I was passing the farm-house of a friend,  
When his children called from a gate of thorn  
And led me twining through jade bamboos  
Where green vines caught and held my clothes.  
And I was glad of a chance to rest  
And glad of a chance to drink with my friend....  
We sang to the tune of the wind in the pines;  
And we finished our songs as the stars went down,  
When, I being drunk and my friend more than happy,  
Between us we forgot the world.

Li Bai

# Drinking Alone With The Moon

From a pot of wine among the flowers  
I drank alone. There was no one with me  
Till, raising my cup, I asked the bright moon  
To bring me my shadow and make us three.  
Alas, the moon was unable to drink  
And my shadow tagged me vacantly;  
But still for a while I had these friends  
To cheer me through the end of spring....  
I sang. The moon encouraged me.  
I danced. My shadow tumbled after.  
As long as I knew, we were boon companions.  
And then I was drunk, and we lost one another.  
...Shall goodwill ever be secure?  
I watch the long road of the River of Stars.

Li Bai

# Endless Yearning I

'I am endlessly yearning

To be in Changan.

...Insects hum of autumn by the gold brim of the well;

A thin frost glistens like little mirrors on my cold mat;

The high lantern flickers; and, deeper grows my longing.

I lift the shade and, with many a sigh, gaze upon the moon,

Single as a flower, centred from the clouds.

Above, I see the blueness and deepness of sky.

Below, I see the greenness and the restlessness of water....

Heaven is high, earth wide; bitter between them flies my sorrow.

Can I dream through the gateway, over the mountain?

Endless longing

Breaks my heart.'

Li Bai

## Endless Yearning II

'The sun has set, and a mist is in the flowers;  
And the moon grows very white and people sad and sleepless.  
A Zhao harp has just been laid mute on its phoenix holder,  
And a Shu lute begins to sound its mandarin-duck strings....  
Since nobody can bear to you the burden of my song,  
Would that it might follow the spring wind to Yanran Mountain.  
I think of you far away, beyond the blue sky,  
And my eyes that once were sparkling  
Are now a well of tears.  
...Oh, if ever you should doubt this aching of my heart,  
Here in my bright mirror come back and look at me!'

Li Bai

## For Wang Lun

Li Bai ride boat will about to travel  
Suddenly hear bank on stamp sing sound  
Taohua pool water deep thousand feet  
Less than Wang Lun accompany me feeling□  
Li Bai is already on the boat, preparing to depart,  
I suddenly hear the sound of stamping and singing on the shore.  
The water of Taohua pond reaches a thousand feet in depth,  
But still it's not as deep as Wang Lun's feelings seeing me off.

Li Bai

# Green Mountain

Chang-an - one slip of moon;  
in ten thousand houses, the sound of fulling mallets.  
Autumn winds keep on blowing,  
all things make me think of Jade Pass!  
When will they put down the barbarians  
and my good man come home from his far campaign?

Li Bai

## Hard Is The Way Of The World II

The way is broad like the blue sky,  
But no way out before my eye.  
I am ashamed to follow those who have no guts,  
Gambling on fighting cocks and dogs for pears and nuts.  
Feng would go homeward way, having no fish to eat;  
Zhou did not think to bow to noblemen was meet.  
General Han was mocked in the market-place;  
The brilliant scholar Jia was banished in disgrace.  
Have you not heard of King of Yan in days gone by,  
Who venerated talents and built Terrace high  
On which he offered gold to gifted men  
And stooped low and swept the floor to welcome them?  
Grateful, Ju Xin and Yue Yi came then  
And served him heart and soul, both full of stratagem.  
The King's bones were now buried,  
who would sweep the floor of the Gold Terrace any more?  
Hard is the way.  
Go back without delay!

Li Bai

## Hard Is The Way Of The World Iii

Don't wash your ears on hearing something you dislike  
Nor die of hunger like famous hermits on the Pike!  
Living without a fame among the motley crowd,  
Why should one be as lofty as the moon or cloud?  
Of ancient talents who failed to retire, there's none  
But came to tragic ending after glory's won.  
The head of General Wu was hung o'er city gate;  
In the river was drowned the poet laureate.  
The highly talented scholar wished in vain  
To preserve his life to hear the cry of the crane.  
Minister Li regretted not to have retired  
To hunt with falcon gray as he had long desired.  
Have you not heard of Zhang Han who resigned, carefree,  
To go home to eat his perch with high glee?  
Enjoy a cup of wine while you're alive!  
Do not care if your fame will not survive!

Li Bai

## Hard Roads In Shu

Oh, but it is high and very dangerous!  
Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky.  
...Until two rulers of this region  
Pushed their way through in the misty ages,  
Forty-eight thousand years had passed  
With nobody arriving across the Qin border.  
And the Great White Mountain, westward, still has only a bird's path  
Up to the summit of Emei Peak -  
Which was broken once by an earthquake and there were brave men lost,  
Just finishing the stone rungs of their ladder toward heaven.  
...High, as on a tall flag, six dragons drive the sun,  
While the river, far below, lashes its twisted course.  
Such height would be hard going for even a yellow crane,  
So pity the poor monkeys who have only paws to use.  
The Mountain of Green Clay is formed of many circles-  
Each hundred steps, we have to turn nine turns among its mound -  
Panting, we brush Orion and pass the Well Star,  
Then, holding our chests with our hands and sinking to the ground with a groan,  
We wonder if this westward trail will never have an end.  
The formidable path ahead grows darker, darker still,  
With nothing heard but the call of birds hemmed in by the ancient forest,  
Male birds smoothly wheeling, following the females;  
And there come to us the melancholy voices of the cuckoos  
Out on the empty mountain, under the lonely moon....  
Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky.  
Even to hear of it turns the cheek pale,  
With the highest crag barely a foot below heaven.  
Dry pines hang, head down, from the face of the cliffs,  
And a thousand plunging cataracts outroar one another  
And send through ten thousand valleys a thunder of spinning stones.  
With all this danger upon danger,  
Why do people come here who live at a safe distance?  
...Though Dagger-Tower Pass be firm and grim,  
And while one man guards it  
Ten thousand cannot force it,  
What if he be not loyal,  
But a wolf toward his fellows?  
...There are ravenous tigers to fear in the day  
And venomous reptiles in the night

With their teeth and their fangs ready  
To cut people down like hemp.  
Though the City of Silk be delectable, I would rather turn home quickly.  
Such travelling is harder than scaling the blue sky....  
But I still face westward with a dreary moan.

Li Bai

# Hearing A Flute On A Spring Night In Luoyang

From whose home secretly flies the sound of a jade flute?  
It's lost amid the spring wind which fills Luoyang city.  
In the middle of this nocturne I remember the snapped willow,  
What person would not start to think of home!

Li Bai

# In Spring

Your grasses up north are as blue as jade,  
Our mulberries here curve green-threaded branches;  
And at last you think of returning home,  
Now when my heart is almost broken....  
O breeze of the spring, since I dare not know you,  
Why part the silk curtains by my bed?

Li Bai

# In The Quiet Night

So bright a gleam on the foot of my bed  
Could there have been a frost already?  
Lifting myself to look, I found that it was moonlight.  
Sinking back again, I thought suddenly of home.

Li Bai

# Laolao Ting Pavilion

Heaven below damage heart place  
Laolao see off visitor pavilion  
Spring wind know parting sorrow  
Not send willow twig green.□  
What place under heaven most hurts the heart?  
Laolao Ting, for seeing visitors off.  
The spring wind knows how bitter it is to part,  
The willow twig will never again be green.

Li Bai

# Long Yearning

Long yearning  
In Chang'an  
Web woof autumn call gold well railing  
Coalesce frost freezing bamboo mat look cold  
Lonely lamp not bright think almost cut  
Roll curtain gaze moon vain long sigh  
Beautiful person like flower separate cloud end  
Above be black night () high heaven  
Below be green water () billow  
Heaven long road far spirit fly bitter  
Dream spirit not arrive pass mountain difficult

Long yearning

Break heart□

Long yearning,  
To be in Chang'an.

The grasshoppers weave their autumn song by the golden railing of the well;  
Frost coalesces on my bamboo mat, changing its colour with cold.  
My lonely lamp is not bright, I'd like to end these thoughts;  
I roll back the hanging, gaze at the moon, and long sigh in vain.  
The beautiful person's like a flower beyond the edge of the clouds.  
Above is the black night of heaven's height;  
Below is the green water billowing on.  
The sky is long, the road is far, bitter flies my spirit;  
The spirit I dream can't get through, the mountain pass is hard.  
Long yearning,  
Breaks my heart.

Li Bai

# Marble Steps Complaint

Jade steps grow white dew  
Night long encroach gauze stocking  
But fall crystal curtain  
Exquisite view autumn moon□  
White dew grows on the marble steps,  
And in the long night, soaks into my stockings.  
But now I let the crystal curtain down,  
And gaze through it at the autumn moon.

Li Bai

# Midnight Song Of Wu

Chang'an one disc moon  
Ten thousand households pound clothes noise  
Autumn wind blow no end  
Always jade pass think  
What day pacify Hu prisoner  
Husband end long journey□  
In Chang'an city is the disk of the moon,  
The sound of pounding clothes in ten thousand households.  
The autumn wind is blowing without cease,  
All the time I think of Yuguang pass.  
When will we pacify the pillaging Hu,  
So my husband can end his long journey?

Li Bai

## Moon Over Mountain Pass

A bright moon rising above Tian Shan Mountain,  
Lost in a vast ocean of clouds.  
The long wind, across thousands upon thousands of miles,  
Blows past the Jade-gate Pass.  
The army of Han has gone down the Baiteng Road,  
As the barbarian hordes probe at Qinghai Bay.  
It is known that from the battlefield  
Few ever live to return.  
Men at Garrison look on the border scene,  
Home thoughts deepen sorrow on their faces.  
In the towered chambers tonight,  
Ceaseless are the women's sighs.

Li Bai

# Night Thoughts

The moon shines so brightly besides my bed,  
As ground frost I mistook its reflection,  
To the moon I lifted my eyes ahead,  
Hopelessly homesick as I bowed my head,

Li Bai

## On Climbing In Nanjing To The Terrace Of Phoenixes

Phoenixes that played here once, so that the place was named for them,  
Have abandoned it now to this desolate river;  
The paths of Wu Palace are crooked with weeds;  
The garments of Qin are ancient dust.  
...Like this green horizon halving the Three Peaks,  
Like this Island of White Egrets dividing the river,  
A cloud has arisen between the Light of Heaven and me,  
To hide his city from my melancholy heart.

Li Bai

# On Climbing In Nan-King To The Terrace Of Phoenixes

Phoenixes that play here once, so that the place was named for them,  
Have abandoned it now to this desolated river;  
The paths of Wu Palace are crooked with weeds;  
The garments of Chin are ancient dust.  
...Like this green horizon halving the Three Peaks,  
Like this Island of White Egrets dividing the river,  
A cloud has risen between the Light of Heaven and me,  
To hide his city from my melancholy heart.

Li Bai

# On Hearing Jun The Buddhist Monk From Shu Play His Lute

The monk from Shu with his green silk lute-case,  
Walking west down Omei Mountain,  
Has brought me by one touch of the strings  
The breath of pines in a thousand valleys.  
I hear him in the cleansing brook,  
I hear him in the icy bells;  
And I feel no change though the mountain darken  
And cloudy autumn heaps the sky.

Li Bai

## Parting At A Wine-Shop In Nanjing

A wind, bringing willow-cotton, sweetens the shop,  
And a girl from Wu, pouring wine, urges me to share it  
With my comrades of the city who are here to see me off;  
And as each of them drains his cup, I say to him in parting,  
Oh, go and ask this river running to the east  
If it can travel farther than a friend's love!

Li Bai

## Parting At A Wine-Shop In Nan-King

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Li Bai

# Question And Answer On The Mountain

Ask me what reason stay green mountain  
Smile but not answer heart self idle  
Peach blossom flow water far go  
Apart have heaven earth in human world□  
You ask for what reason I stay on the green mountain,  
I smile, but do not answer, my heart is at leisure.  
Peach blossom is carried far off by flowing water,  
Apart, I have heaven and earth in the human world.

Li Bai

## Seeing A Friend Off

Green mountains range beyond the northern wall.  
White water rushes round the eastern town.  
Right here is where, alone and restless, he  
Begins a journey of a thousand miles.

While travelers' intents are fleeting clouds,  
A friend's affection is a setting sun.  
He waves good-bye, and as he goes from here,  
His dappled horse lets out a lonely neigh.

(Translated by Stephen Carlson)

Li Bai

# Seeing Off Meng Haoran For Guangling At Yellow Crane Tower

Old friend west take leave yellow crane tower

Mist flowers three month down Yangzhou

Lone sail far shadow blue empty to limit

Only see Yangtze River horizon flow□

My old friend's said goodbye to the west, here at Yellow Crane Tower,

In the third month's cloud of willow blossoms, he's going down to Yangzhou.

The lonely sail is a distant shadow, on the edge of a blue emptiness,

All I see is the Yangtze River flow to the far horizon.

Li Bai

# Sent To Du Fu Below Shaqiu City

I come finally what thing  
High lie Sha qiu city  
City beside are ancient trees  
Sun set join autumn sounds  
Lu wine not can drunk  
Qi song vain again feel  
Think you resemble Wen water  
Mighty immense send south journey□  
What is it that I've come to now?  
High before me: Shaqiu city.  
Beside the city, ancient trees;  
The sunset joins the autumn sounds.  
The Lu wine cannot make me drunk,  
Qi's songs cannot restore my feelings.  
My thoughts of you are like the Wen's waters,  
Mightily sent on their southern journey.

Li Bai

# Sitting Alone On Jingting Shan Hill

Crowd birds high fly utmost  
Lonely cloud alone go idle  
Mutual watch both not tire  
Only be Jingting Shan□  
A flock of birds is flying high in the distance,  
A lonely cloud drifts idly on its own.  
We gaze at each other, neither growing tired,  
There is only Jingting Shan.

Li Bai

# Spring Night In Lo-Yang Hearing A Flute

In what house, the jade flute that sends these dark notes drifting,  
scattering on the spring wind that fills Lo-yang?  
Tonight if we should hear the willow-breaking song,  
who could help but long for the gardens of home?

Li Bai

# Staying The Night At A Mountain Temple

High tower high hundred feet  
Hand can pluck stars  
Not dare high voice speak  
Fear startle heaven on person□  
The high tower is a hundred feet tall,  
From here one's hand could pluck the stars.  
I do not dare to speak in a loud voice,  
I fear to disturb the people in heaven.

Li Bai

# The Hard Road

Pure wine costs, for the golden cup, ten thousand coppers a flagon,  
And a jade plate of dainty food calls for a million coins.  
I fling aside my food-sticks and cup, I cannot eat nor drink....  
I pull out my dagger, I peer four ways in vain.  
I would cross the Yellow River, but ice chokes the ferry;  
I would climb the Taihang Mountains, but the sky is blind with snow....  
I would sit and poise a fishing-pole, lazy by a brook -  
But I suddenly dream of riding a boat, sailing for the sun....  
Journeying is hard,  
Journeying is hard.  
There are many turnings -  
Which am I to follow?....  
I will mount a long wind some day and break the heavy waves  
And set my cloudy sail straight and bridge the deep, deep sea.

Li Bai

## The Hard Road - 1 Of 3

Pure wine costs, for the golden cup, ten thousand coppers a flagon,  
And a jade plate of dainty food calls for million coins.  
I fling aside my chop-sticks and cup, I cannot eat nor drink...  
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Li Bai

# The Jewel Stairs' Grievance

The jewelled steps are already quite white with dew,  
It is so late that the dew soaks my gauze stockings,  
And I let down the crystal curtain  
And watch the moon through the clear autumn.

Li Bai

# The Moon At The Fortified Pass

The bright moon lifts from the Mountain of Heaven  
In an infinite haze of cloud and sea,  
And the wind, that has come a thousand miles,  
Beats at the Jade Pass battlements....  
China marches its men down Baideng Road  
While Tartar troops peer across blue waters of the bay....  
And since not one battle famous in history  
Sent all its fighters back again,  
The soldiers turn round, looking toward the border,  
And think of home, with wistful eyes,  
And of those tonight in the upper chambers  
Who toss and sigh and cannot rest.

Li Bai

# The River Merchant's Wife

While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead  
I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.  
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,  
You walked about my seat, playing with blue plums.  
And we went on living in the village of Chokan:  
Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.  
At fourteen I married My Lord you.  
I never laughed, being bashful.  
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.  
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.

At fifteen I stopped scowling,  
I desired my dust to be mingled with yours  
Forever and forever and forever.  
Why should I climb the look out?

At sixteen you departed,  
You went into far Ku-to-en, by the river of swirling eddies,  
And you have been gone five months.  
The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.

You dragged your feet when you went out.  
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different mosses,  
Too deep to clear them away!  
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.  
The paired butterflies are already yellow with August  
Over the grass in the West garden;  
They hurt me. I grow older.  
If you are coming down through the narrows of the river Kiang,  
Please let me know beforehand,  
And I will come out to meet you  
□

Li Bai

# Thoughts Of Old Time From A Night-Mooring Under Mount Niu-Zhu

This night to the west of the river-brim  
There is not one cloud in the whole blue sky,  
As I watch from my deck the autumn moon,  
Vainly remembering old General Xie....  
I have poems; I can read;  
He heard others, but not mine.  
...Tomorrow I shall hoist my sail,  
With fallen maple-leaves behind me.

Li Bai

# Thoughts On A Still Night

Bed before bright moon shine  
Think be ground on frost  
Raise head view bright moon  
Lower head think home□  
Before my bed, the moon is shining bright,  
I think that it is frost upon the ground.  
I raise my head and look at the bright moon,  
I lower my head and think of home.

Li Bai

# Through The Yangzi Gorges

From the walls of Baidi high in the coloured dawn  
To Jiangling by night-fall is three hundred miles,  
Yet monkeys are still calling on both banks behind me  
To my boat these ten thousand mountains away.

Li Bai

# Tianmu Mountain Ascended In A Dream

A seafaring visitor will talk about Japan,  
Which waters and mists conceal beyond approach;  
But Yueh people talk about Heavenly Mother Mountain,  
Still seen through its varying deeps of cloud.  
In a straight line to heaven, its summit enters heaven,  
Tops the five Holy Peaks, and casts a shadow through China  
With the hundred-mile length of the Heavenly Terrace Range,  
Which, just at this point, begins turning southeast.  
...My heart and my dreams are in Wu and Yueh  
And they cross Mirror Lake all night in the moon.  
And the moon lights my shadow  
And me to Yan River -  
With the hermitage of Xie still there  
And the monkeys calling clearly over ripples of green water.  
I wear his pegged boots  
Up a ladder of blue cloud,  
Sunny ocean half-way,  
Holy cock-crow in space,  
Myriad peaks and more valleys and nowhere a road.  
Flowers lure me, rocks ease me. Day suddenly ends.  
Bears, dragons, tempestuous on mountain and river,  
Startle the forest and make the heights tremble.  
Clouds darken with darkness of rain,  
Streams pale with pallor of mist.  
The Gods of Thunder and Lightning  
Shatter the whole range.  
The stone gate breaks asunder  
Venting in the pit of heaven,  
An impenetrable shadow.  
...But now the sun and moon illumine a gold and silver terrace,  
And, clad in rainbow garments, riding on the wind,  
Come the queens of all the clouds, descending one by one,  
With tigers for their lute-players and phoenixes for dancers.  
Row upon row, like fields of hemp, range the fairy figures.  
I move, my soul goes flying,  
I wake with a long sigh,  
My pillow and my matting  
Are the lost clouds I was in.  
...And this is the way it always is with human joy:

Ten thousand things run for ever like water toward the east.  
And so I take my leave of you, not knowing for how long.  
...But let me, on my green slope, raise a white deer  
And ride to you, great mountain, when I have need of you.  
Oh, how can I gravely bow and scrape to men of high rank and men of high  
office  
Who never will suffer being shown an honest-hearted face!

Li Bai

# To Wang Lun

Li Po takes a boat and is about to depart  
When suddenly he hears the sound of footsteps  
and singing on the shore.

The water in the Peach Blossom pool is  
a thousand feet deep  
But not as deep as Wang Lun's parting love for me

(translated by Liu Wu-Chi)

Li Bai

# Viewing Heaven's Gate Mountains

Heaven gate middle cut Chu River open  
Green water east flow reach here turn  
Both banks blue mountain mutual face out  
Lonely sail one disc sun beside come□  
The River Chu cuts through the middle of heaven's gate,  
The green water flowing east reaches here then swirls.  
On either bank the blue hills face towards each other,  
The flatness of a lonely sail comes from by of the sun.

Li Bai

# Visiting The Taoist Priest Dai Tianshan But Not Finding Him

Dog bark water sound in  
Peach blossom bring rain thick  
Tree deep occasionally see deer  
Stream noon not hear bell  
Wild bamboo divide green mist  
Fly spring hang green peak  
Lack person know place go  
Sad lean two three pines□  
A dog's bark amid the water's sound,  
Peach blossom that's made thicker by the rain.  
Deep in the trees, I sometimes see a deer,  
And at the stream I hear no noonday bell.  
Wild bamboo divides the green mist,  
A flying spring hangs from the jasper peak.  
No-one knows the place to which he's gone,  
Sadly, I lean on two or three pines.

Li Bai