

001

Zhang Jiuling

THOUGHTS I

A lonely swan from the sea flies,
To alight on puddles it does not deign.
Nesting in the poplar of pearls
It spies and questions green birds twain:
"Don't you fear the threat of slings,
Perched on top of branches so high?
Nice clothes invite pointing fingers,
High climbers god's good will defy.
Bird-hunters will crave me in vain,
For I roam the limitless sky."

002

Zhang Jiuling

ORCHID AND ORANGE I

Tender orchid-leaves in spring
And cinnamon- blossoms bright in autumn
Are as self- contained as life is,
Which conforms them to the seasons.
Yet why will you think that a forest-hermit,
Allured by sweet winds and contented with beauty,
Would no more ask to-be transplanted
THan Would any other natural flower?

003

Zhang Jiuling

THOUGHTS III

The hermit in his lone abode
Nurses his thoughts cleansed of care,
Them he projects to the wild goose
For it to his distant Sovereign to bear.

Who will be moved by the sincerity
Of my vain day-and-night prayer?
What comfort is for my loyalty
When fliers and sinkers can compare?

004

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ORCHID AND ORANGE II

Here, south of the Yangzi, grows a red orangetree.
All winter long its leaves are green,
Not because of a warmer soil,
But because its' nature is used to the cold.
Though it might serve your honourable guests,
You leave it here, far below mountain and river.
Circumstance governs destiny.
Cause and effect are an infinite cycle.
You plant your peach-trees and your plums,
You forget the shade from this other tree.

005

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.

006

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.