To the Tune of Kan-ts'ao tzu

Autumn evening,
Rain splashes on wilted lotus, each drop a pearl.
After the rain the moon appears,
And coolness fills the mandarin-duck bank.

I lean against the railing by the pond,
Sad for a companion.
How can I bear this loneliness?
I approach the golden cage
And with the parrot repeat the words of my beloved.
When I am about to close the perfumed curtain to indulge in love,
She knits her eyebrows and complains that the night is short.
She urges me to go to bed first.
To get warm under the mandarin-duck quilt.

After a while, she puts down her unfinished needlework,
And removes her silk skirt,
Exhibiting her passion with abandon.
In front of the curtain, I leave the lamp on,
So that I can look at her face
Time and time again.

To the Tune of Chü-hua hsin
望海潮

東南形勝
三吳都會
錢塘自古繁華
煙柳畫橋
風騷翠幕
參差十萬人家
雲樹繞堤沙
怒濤卷霜雪
天塹無涯
市列珠璣
戶盈羅绮競豪奢

To the Tune of Wang hai-ch’ao

A scenic spot in the South-East,
The capital city of the Three-wu region,
Ch’ien-t’ang has been bustling since ancient days.
There are misty willows and painted bridges;
There are swaying blinds and green jade curtains
Amidst a hundred thousand households in rows.
Trees soar into the sky around the dykes and the sands.
Furious billows hurl up frost and snow.
The river stretches endlessly.
In the markets, pearls and gems are displayed.
Houses are full of people in silk,
Vying with each other in showing off their wealth.
Liu Yung

Lakes adjoining lakes and peaks upon peaks are clear and beautiful, with autumn cassia and miles of lotus flowers. On sunny days, Ch'iang flutes pipe. At night, water-caltrop songs are heard everywhere. Happy are the old fishermen and the lotus girls. Thousands of cavalrymen escort the lofty banners. Tipsy, I listen to the lutes and the drums, chanting poetry and admiring the mist and clouds. Some day, I will go back to the capital and proudly describe this beautiful scene to my colleagues.
傾杯
鸏落霜洲
雁橫煙渚
分明畫出秋色
暮雨乍歇
小艒夜泊
宿葦村山驛
何人月下臨風處
起一聲羌笛
離愁萬緒
聞岸草
切切蛩吟如織

To the Tune of Ch'ing pei

The wild ducks descending on the frosty isles
And the wild-geese flying across the misty sand-bank
Clearly delineate an autumn scene.
The evening rain has just stopped.
At nightfall, I moor my small boat by the riverside,
And lodge in a post-house up the hill in the reeded village.
Facing the wind in the moonlight
Who is there playing the Ch'iang flute?
Hearing the crickets in the shore grass
I am filled with the sorrow of parting.
I recall that, since I left her,

Separated by rivers and mountains,

I have had no means to send her messages.

In her secluded chamber, how would she know

That a traveller is wasting away

At the end of the world?

Where are my former lovers

And passionate companions?

Not a trace of their revelling to be found.

I gaze at the capital, but in vain.

In the distance, the peaks are silent in a limpid blue.
To the Tune of *Yin chia hsing*

The rainbow has gathered up the rain.
As evening descends upon the long dyke,
Cicadas chirp in the withered willows.
In sorrowful mood I turn my back.
Upon the capital and start my journey.
My light sail is hoisted in the west wind.
In sorrow,
I see the painted boat moving gracefully.
With the faint rumbling of its drums heading downstream.
I cannot bear to look back,
For my love is left farther and farther behind.
Though the capital is in my thoughts,
It is blocked by the trees in the mist.
How many times have I spent the whole day in the house of courtesans? How many nights have I had amorous encounters in their mansions? Even though I gave away a thousand pieces of gold to buy her smile, Even though I paid a hundred strings of pearls for her song, All for nothing but fickleness As I look south: In winds and mist forlorn, The States of Wu and Yüeh are nowhere to be found. Alone, amidst endless mountains and rivers I make for the end of the sky.
To the Tune of Yeh-pan yüeh

On such a sunny day,
When the mist is light, the breeze warm,
I meditate in the clear, fragrant countryside.
Beautiful trees, short and tall,
Are decking the pavilions and terraces.
Weeping willows, languorous from dancing,
Are dazzling in green.
Light peaches and luxuriant plums are flourishing,
With myriads of pink flowers.
Lovely flying swallows and orioles
Are trying to outdo each other in song.

On the southern path are bevies of beautiful girls
Leisurely moving their elegant steps
Under the flower shades.
When they raise their powdered faces,
Even the flower envy them.
They raise their red silk sleeves,
Their cloud-like hair quivering gently in the breeze.
Half covering their red lips with their sleeves,
They shyly turn their head and steal a look at the passers-by.
Laughing, they play the “grass game” and bet with their golden pins.

Facing such a beautiful scene,
I suddenly feel lost,
With sorrow gradually aroused in me.
Where is the beautiful one who undid her pendants?
How could one bear to waste the happy hours of youth?
In vain, I look back and gaze at the setting sun as dusk falls,
I ask, like a drifting duckweed and the stem in the wind,
Whither shall I be going?
In weather such as this, with a light coverlet and a small pillow,  
I suddenly realize what it feels like to be parted. 
Tossing about in bed, I count the sounds of the watch in the cold night. 
I get up and go back to bed again, 
But still I’m unable to go to sleep,  
For the night is long as a year.

I have thought of turning back my horse, 
Only I have already made up my mind to travel. 
I ponder over this many times, 
Trying to cheer myself in many ways.  
In this manner, I am overwhelmed by loneliness and languor.  
All my life my heart is tied to you, 
Which you shed a thousand tears in vain.
To the Tune of Ying-ch’un yüeh

Recently people are surprised at my haggard looks.  
This is all because after our parting  
I have been pining for her.  
In my previous life  
I must have owed you a debt of sorrow.  
Thus it is so difficult to cheer myself.  
The beautiful night is long;  
Distracted by love, what can I do with it?  
Inside the brocade quilt her fragrance still remains.  
How can I have her here as before  
And feast my eyes on her loveliness under the lamp?
To the Tune of *Ch'ing pei*

She is busy preparing a farewell drink
While the magnolia boat is waiting.
It is time to bid farewell on the southern bank.
Now I realize that in this world
It is not possible for the moon to be always full,
Or for the colorful clouds to stay together.
In one’s life,
Nothing could be more grievous
Than allowing ourselves to be parted too lightly,
And the most painful thing is to separate during happy hours.
With tears trickling down her jade-like face,
She is like a branch of pear-flowers in the spring rain.
Her forlorn, black eyebrows are beautiful and cheerless.
Together our souls waste in gloom.
When I hold her delicate hands again to bid farewell,
She asks again and again,
"Must you go?"
She keeps whispering in my ear,
"Do you know how much of the deep vow you made in the past,
Together with my love in this life,
Is entrusted on the fish-and-bird messenger."
To the Tune of *P’o-lo-men ling*

Last night, in this manner,
I slept with my clothes on.
Tonight I will, again, sleep with my clothes on.
When I returned from a brief drinking-bout,
The first watch being over, and I dead drunk.
Why did I wake up after midnight?
In the cold and frosty sky,
A gentle wind was blowing.
As it brushed past the window,
The lamp flickered.
Tossing about in my empty bed,
I try again to recall our intimacy.
Yet, leaning on my pillow, I cannot recapture it.
My heart is filled with myriad thoughts.
She is so near and yet so far.
On fine days with beautiful scenery,
Without the means to realize our love,
We love each other in vain.
定風波
自春來
惨綠愁紅
芳心是事可可
日上花梢
鶯穿柳帶
獨壓香衾臥
暖酥消
膩雲韻
終日厭厭倦梳裹
無那
恨薄情一去
音書無簡

To the Tune of Ting feng-po

Ever since spring came with its grieving green and sad red,
I have lost interest in doing anything.
The sun has risen to the tip of the flowers;
The orioles are flying through the willow branches.
Still I lie on the perfumed quilt,
The warm cream on my face having faded,
My hair hanging down.
All day long I feel too languorous to do my make-up.
What else can I do?
I hate the fickle one, who, once gone,
Sends me not a word.
Had I foreseen this, I would have locked his carved-saddle.
Forcing him to sit in his study,
I would give him only Szuch’üan paper and an ivory brush,
And make him recite his lessons.
I would follow him closely, never leaving him alone.
Idly holding a needle and thread,
I would sit by him,
And he would be with me alone.
Thus, my youth would not be spent in vain.
Ying-ying is lithe in her wonderful dancing,
Like Green Willow and Flying Swallow\(^1\)
Feasting in magnificent halls,
High-ranking officials in brocade gowns
Compete with one another in bidding for her,
Offering a thousand pieces of gold.
She casts a glance upon the perfumed stone steps,
To the sound of musical instrument freshly tuned,
Her pendants trembling faintly in the gentle breeze.
As she starts the quick beat of the Ni-shang dance,
With grace she speeds up the castanets.
Slowly letting fall her cloud-like sleeves,
She hastens her lotus steps.
Back and forth she shows myriad variations in her wondrous postures,
Quite capable of overturning cities and states,
But, with only one brief backward glance,
Teases to death ten thousand men.

¹Miss Liu ("Green Willow") a famous courtesan of the T'ang dynasty; Chao Fei-yen (Flying Swallow), consort of Emperor Ch'eng of the Han dynasty, noted for her lightness and lithesome beauty.
To the Tune of *Mu-lan-hua ling*

There is a maiden of great beauty
Yet when I talk to her she turns her face away repeatedly.

If you do not care for me,
Why then do you often appear in my dream?

You had better grant me my wish sooner,
Lest you should disturb my empty soul.

My amorous heart is weak,
I fear it will break for being attached to you.