

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Su Shi**  
**- poems -**

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# Su Shi()

# Dreaming Of My Deceased Wife On The Night Of The 20th Day Of The First Month

Ten years living dead both boundless  
Not think of capacity self hardly possible forget  
Thousand li alone grave not place say wife cold  
Even if together meet must not recognise  
Dust cover face, temples like frost  
Night come deep dream suddenly return home  
Little window properly dress make up  
Mutual look not speak, just be tears too much flow  
Expect must every year heart break place  
Bright moon night thin pine guard□  
Ten boundless years now separate the living and the dead,  
I have not often thought of her, but neither can I forget.  
Her lonely grave is a thousand li distant, I can't say where my wife lies cold.  
We could not recognise each other even if we met again,  
My face is all but covered with dust, my temples glazed with frost.  
In deepest night, a sudden dream returns me to my homeland,  
She sits before a little window, and sorts her dress and make-up.  
We look at each other without a word, a thousand tears now flow.  
I must accept that every year I'll think of that heart breaking place,  
Where the moon shines brightly in the night, and bare pines guard the tomb.

Su Shi

# Impromptu Verse

Lonely east slope a sick old man  
White hair dull loose all frost wind  
Son mistaken happy red face at  
A smile that know is alcohol red  
A lonely sick old man on eastern slope,  
My frosty hair blows loosely in the wind.  
My son, mistaken, is pleased by my ruddy face,  
I smile: I know it's alcoholic red.

Su Shi

# Impromptu Verse (My Frosty Hair Blows Loosely In The Wind)

White head dull loose all frost wind  
Small pavilion rattan bed dependent sick appear  
Report doctor spring sleep beautiful  
Taoist softly ring fifth watch bell  
My frosty hair blows loosely in the wind,  
In this small pavilion, I lie sick on a rattan bed.  
The doctor's reported my beautiful sleep this spring,  
The Taoist rings the fifth watch bell with care.

Su Shi

## Mid-Autumn Moon

Sunset cloud gather far excess clear cold

Milky Way silent turn jade plate

This life this night not long good

Next year bright moon where see□

The sunset clouds are gathered far away, it's clear and cold,

The Milky Way is silent, I turn to the jade plate.

The goodness of this life and of this night will not last for long,

Next year where will I watch the bright moon?

Su Shi

# New Year's Watch

Soon know approach end year  
be like go to hole snake  
Long scales half already disappear  
Go all trace who able stop  
If wish tie his tail  
Even if diligent know to no avail  
Children try not sleep  
Mutual watch night cheer noise  
Dawn chicken for now not cry  
Further, drum respect increase  
Sit long lamp ashes down  
Rise see north plough slant  
Next year not natural span of years  
Worry fear waste time  
Exert oneself to utmost today evening  
Youth still ability praise□  
Soon now, we'll mark the year's end that approaches,  
It's like a snake that crawls into a hole.  
Already half its scaly length is hidden,  
What man can stop us losing the last trace?  
And even if we want to tie its tail,  
No matter how we try, we can't succeed.  
The children make all effort not to sleep,  
We laugh together, watching through the night.  
The cockerels should not cry the dawn for now,  
The drums as well should give the hour respect.  
We sat so long the lamp's burnt down to ash,  
I rise and see the Plough is slanting north.  
Next year, perhaps, my span of years could end,  
My fear is that I've just been marking time.  
So exert ourselves to the utmost here tonight,  
I still admire the exuberance of our youth!

Su Shi

# Remembrance

To what can our life on earth be likened?  
To a flock of geese,  
alighting on the snow.  
Sometimes leaving a trace of their passage.

Su Shi



# The Immortal By The River

Drinking through the night at East Slope,  
still drunk on waking-up,  
I return home around midnight.  
My house-boy snores like thunder,  
no answer to my knock.

Leaning on my stick, listening to the river,  
I wish this body belonged to someone else.  
When can I escape this turmoil?

In the deep night, with the wind still, the sea calm;  
I'll find a boat and drift away,  
to spend my final years afloat,  
trusting to the river and the sea.

Su Shi

# Visiting The Temple Of Auspicious Fortune Alone On Winter Solstice

Well bottom deep warmth return not return  
Sighing cold rain wet withered root  
What person more like come to teacher  
Not be flower time willing come alone  
Deep at the bottom of the well no warmth has yet returned,  
The rain which sighs and feels so cold has dampened withered roots.  
What sort of man at such a time would come to visit the teacher?  
As this is not a time for flowers, I find I've come alone.

Su Shi

# Visiting The Temple Of The God Of Mercy On A Rainy Day

Silkworm grow old  
Wheat half yellow  
Around mountain rain unrestrained  
Farmer person stop plough  
Women discard basket  
White clothes immortals on high hall  
The silkworms grow old,  
The wheat half yellow,  
The rain falls unrestrained about the mountain.  
The farmers cannot work the land,  
Nor women gather mulberry,  
The Immortals sit high in white robes in the hall.

Su Shi

# Written While Drunk In Lake-View Pavilion On The 27th Day Of The Sixth Month

Black cloud fly ink not cover hills  
White rain leap drops random into boat  
Sweep earth wind come suddenly blow disperse  
View lake downstairs water like sky  
The inky clouds fly in, but do not hide the hills,  
As random drops of white rain leap into the boats.  
A sudden wind arrives and sweeps across the earth,  
Below I see the lake a mirror of the sky.

Su Shi