

Homage to Dufu's Cottage

By Yang Lian

Translated by L. Leigh

1.

Thirty years walked from this side to the other side of summer
thirty years stepping into autumn

A glass of stronger wine
set before me reflects a swallowed smile

Aroma of gardenia still sews up cracked dusk
The cottage is a straw boat listens to the sound of water within me

running past but never out of
a shady green pond's sighing diameter

Strolling in forest my breath weaves through bamboo leaves
as I count the scattered raindrops falling neatly to their death

Thirty years ago the child turned away leaving disturbance in air
Dufu's flower path once more Dufu's wooden door once more

Poets boarded their own deadly boats
painfully scrape this river bed of thirteen hundred years

Light like a blade of grass despite gale's carving
he never rejects what poverty and illness have

gifted him The stone-mill he has pushed
grinds chimney smoke

that floats faintly My maturity
is like a nation grown accustomed to the beauty of sorrow

2.

A line of poetry's dim corridor goes darker and darker
A line of poetry in the quiet garden tourists dispersed
Bamboo touches the sound of wind of rain of birds
Drenched wild flowers resemble trenched human shapes
Give me twilight thirty years
yellowing paper seeping through two water surfaces seeping
through
pushing further away his face and mine A wooden bed a cold quilt
Catch up swallows a faintly scented space continues to linger
in meanings lit up in forgotten flesh and blood
Give me a life unlike any other
but change all paths to shadow He walks slowly
throws down at my side raindrops big as wine glasses
Clouds get darker one candle's light shines up from water's depths
One summer's chill comes out of one thousand summers
Let me forget poetry only then return to
the warmth piercing through bone a death more shocking than
poetry
corrupted by worthless living now become hollow words
Yet I tread carefully on the sea's edge press closely to
his silhouette and forget to pay homage to a cottage
Thirty years a cottage built board by board
I wander all over the world for an endless line of poetry
A history without ruins
at a night when a myriad of twinkling lights offer sacrifices in heart
and nip buds tender and wet forming in the same instant
Give me scarlet brilliance a fragrance kept within
exudes at this moment stars sprout with flickers
I am already that old and beautiful person pure and
clean enough