

Think about this black banner. . . .

How many days can it have in the autumn?

*Facing these majestic mountains and rivers in all directions,
Could they last longer than the lives of my drunken words?*

CLERK: Sir, my wine is better than both nectar and Jade Liquid.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Chi-sheng-ts'ao*)

Say nothing of the nectar or jade liquid.

I think phoenixes and cranes fly over the autumn river.

Like whales I would drink up the waves of the Silver River.¹⁴

*Drinking the lamb wine I would get drunk in the golden-lined
curtains.¹⁵*

It is like Monk Fo-yin who roasted a pig to entertain Tung-p'o.¹⁶

It is better than Wei Yeh's riding on a mule to meet P'an Lang.¹⁷

CLERK: I have heard many stories—of Wang Hung's giving a gift, of Liu Ling's bringing his shovel, of Li Po's fishing of the moon—but none of them was as fond of wine as you.

LÜ: (sings—tune of *Yao-p'ien*)

*For those mortal ones were like walls made of mud and
manure.*

Wang Hung visited a friend, peering through the edge,¹⁸

Li Po fished for the moon and drowned in a river.¹⁹

Liu Ling carried his shovel behind for digging a grave with.²⁰

But I will sing aloud, flying over the Tung-t'ing Lake. . .

*And would not crack my whip entering P'ing-K'ang Lanc by
mistake²¹*

(speaks) Waiter, bring me two hundred coins worth of wine.

CLERK: You give me the money first. Then you can have your wine.

LÜ: You are right. I will give you this ink-stick for two hundred coins worth of wine.

CLERK: You're not kidding me. This ink-stick? What so good about it? How can it be worth two hundred coins?

LÜ: This ink is no ordinary ink-stick. It is worth more than two hundred coins. (sings—tune of *Hou-t'ing-hua*)

This thin ink-stick weighs no more than four ounces,

Yet, how many times can you grind it?

All things are like this.

(speaks) Oh, wine clerk. . . (again sings)

*Throughout your drifting life, you will busy yourself in vain,
But its black heart dwells on merit and fame.^{21a}*

CLERK: I do not want this ink. Give me money.

LÜ: You refuse to exchange wine for this ink-stick?

(sings again)

Then you have muddled on half a sheet of paper.²²

CLERK: (aside) He is a man of a different world. Why can't I do some good? I'll take his ink, and I can use it for keeping my records. Well, I might as well give him two hundred coins worth of wine. (to LÜ) Sir, I will give you the wine. If you can't drink it yourself, you should invite a few Taoist friends to drink with you.

LÜ: You are right, waiter. Watch, I will invite some friends for a drink.

(making a magic gesture) Quickly, come! Come here!

CLERK: Where?

LÜ: Quickly! You too. . . and you!

CLERK: (aside) You see, this man must be mad.

LÜ: One dances, one sings, one pours. I will not return until I get drunk

CLERK: (aside) I said the man is crazy—surely he is. He swings his sleeves to the east, saying, "come here!" Then he swings his sleeves to the west saying, "You too!" Then he said, "One dances, one sings, and one pours."

Where are these people?

LÜ: I don't think you can see them.

(sings—tune of *Chin-chan-erh*)

Here I lean on the couch gazing at the three Hsiangs.²³

There are yellow cranes dancing in pairs; and fairies singing.

The host is generous. Drunkenness is no matter.

I shall drink until the furled screen summons the bright moon.

And a feast is offered with red-dressed girls in company.

A jug (of wine) would detain an ink-seller.

(speaks) I am sleepy. (again singing)

I'll dream of the yellow millet.²⁴

(falls asleep)

CLERK: Well, I knew you couldn't drink up two hundred coins worth of wine yourself. When I suggested you invite a few Taoist friends to drink with you, you did not listen. Now you are indeed drunk (murmurs) He is asleep. What shall I do? There are many ghosts on this tower at night. What if they should harm him? What shall I do? I'd better wake him up.

(calling Lü) Sir, wake up! There are many spirits and ghosts on