

古文賞析

李白

春夜宴桃李園序



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（唐）李白

夫天地者，萬物之逆旅。光陰者，百代之過客。而浮生若夢，爲歡幾何？古人秉燭夜游，良有以也。況陽春召我以煙景，大塊假我以文章。會桃李之芳園，序天倫之樂事。群季俊秀，皆爲惠連；吾人詠歌，獨慚康樂。幽賞未已，高談轉清。開瓊筵以坐花，飛羽觴而醉月。不有佳作，何伸雅懷？如詩不成，罰依金谷酒數。

夫天地者，萬物之逆旅。



The universe is a temporary inn for all living things.

Note: English translation is provided for the convenience of bilingual readers whose mother tongue is not Chinese.

光陰者，百代之過客。



Time is the transit visitors over the span of one hundred generations.

而浮生若夢，為歡幾何？



This drifting life is like a dream. There is too little time to enjoy the pleasure of living.

古人秉燭夜游，良有以也。



Thus, it was quite appropriate for ancient people to, with candlelight in hand, roam at night.

沉陽春召我以煙景，大塊假我以文章。



Now, the sunny spring draws my attention to the misty and beautiful scenes. The great earth inspires me to come up with ideas for my writings.

會桃李之芳園，序天倫之樂事。



Today we are so happy to gather in this fragrant garden of peach and plum trees. What a joy to recount the fun events in our family!

群季俊秀，皆爲惠連；



You, my younger brothers, are so talented and gifted that you remind me of Weilian.

吾人詠歌，獨慚康樂。



But in chanting poetry, I alone feel ashamed for not being on a par with Ling Yun .

幽賞未已，高談轉清。



Before we are through with sightseeing, we change the subject of conversation from talking freely to more elegant topics.

開瓊筵以坐花，飛羽觴而醉月。



In the midst of blooming flowers, we hold our dainty feast. In moonlight, we pass our wine cups swiftly, from seat to seat, until we all feel tipsy.

不有佳作，何伸雅懷？



If we don't compose a good poem for the occasion, how can we elegantly express our feelings?



如詩不成，罰依金谷酒數。



Anyone who fails to come up with a poem will be fined the number of drinks as agreed upon at Jin Gu Yuan***.



Preface to the Feast in Peach and Plum Garden on a Spring Night

Li Bai

Translated by E. C. Chang

The universe is a temporary inn for all living things. Time is the transit visitors over the span of one hundred generations. This drifting life is like a dream. There is too little time to enjoy the pleasure of living. Thus, it was quite appropriate for ancient people to, with candlelight in hand, roam at night. Now, the sunny spring draws my attention to the misty and beautiful scenes. The great earth inspires me to come up with ideas for my writings. Today we are so happy to gather in this fragrant garden of peach and plum trees. What a joy to recount the fun events in our family! You, my younger brothers, are so talented and gifted that you remind me of Weilian*. But in chanting poetry, I alone feel ashamed for not being on a par with Ling Yun**.

Before we are through with sightseeing, we change the subject of conversation from talking freely to more elegant topics. In the midst of blooming flowers, we hold our dainty feast. In moonlight, we pass our wine cups swiftly, from seat to seat, until we all feel tipsy. If we don't compose a good poem for the occasion, how can we elegantly express our feelings? Anyone who fails to come up with a poem will be fined the number of drinks as agreed upon at Jin Gu Yuan***.

* Weilian refers to Xue Wei Lian (394-430), a talented man of letters and cousin of Xie Lingyun.

** Kanle refers to Xie Lingyun (385-433), a renowned man of letters, Xue Wei Lian's cousin on the father's side.

*** The rule stated that whoever failed to do so would be fined three drinks.

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(唐)李白

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