

# Spring Translations

春夜喜雨  
杜甫

好雨知時節  
當春乃發生  
隨風潛入夜  
潤物細無聲  
野徑雲俱黑  
江船火獨明  
曉看紅濕處  
花重錦官城

Fan Wu

**Celebrated Rain (Spring Night)**

**A good spring rain knows its proper  
Season, arrives wreathed in life, shrouded  
Under night wind's secret cover.  
Whisperless dew over summer.**

**Black clouds swell over rural road;  
Riverside, a boat's lit with a sole flare.  
Dawn light spreads wet redness over my  
Chengdu, beloved, ripe with blooming.**

**Rain on Skin (After Deleuze & Guattari)**

... a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle.

**Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus***

**The machine springs its own trap,  
Isomorphic with the living its will brings.**

**And Bill out on the barge, whistling  
Waiting for the troutbringing tide.  
Ask a question of precision:**

**Does it split down the middle?**

**Allow such a law to be excluded.  
Soak & soil, wasp & orchid in anonymous tandem.**

**Spring Translations** **Life, in its quartered crevice of the elements,  
Shivers in body before mind's eye's shudder  
Spreads the dawn of knowledge 'cross the woven city.**

**Want Knot (After Lacan)**

He is originally the inchoate collection of desires—there you have the true sense of the expression *fragmented* body—and the initial synthesis of the ego is essentially an *alter ego*...

**Jacques Lacan, *Seminar III: The Psychoses***

all wet all  
the “I” with throat to speak is  
rainshucked

seasons silt along torso presst to tongue  
*gonfler* the wind flumes O  
an oil man stokes the fire  
my father:

river’s broken mouth disgorges  
a bare of mist  
my back a skiff

酸瀑忘世界

*fi fi fi fi*

*shi*

roof (shingles at my fingertips  
life a laugh like cherry gut to  
Chengdu deepest nesta strained net pulled  
*t’th’ third order of heav’n*

## Sprung a Leak (After My Own Reflection)

Du Fu begins his poem with a prayer for rain's propriety.

Normal weather brings life.

*To work away at this poem in wintertime is to invite improper desire, abundant desire perfumed by linden trees, to your doorstep.*

The second line claims the merely banal, a rehearsed equation between spring and revival.

*This desire that skips like a stone from body to body has rusted over; no good, I need another.*

But the banal arrives in a thief's guise, bringing imperceptible change on stealing feet.

*Nailed through the forehead in the dead of winter; pinned to the floor with the rest of the sin eaters.*

Fleetfooted and sure its touch defrosts the hardness of winter.

*The mania of translation: the failure to render his terse five-character line, which crosscuts the linear time of night & day and the cyclical time of season shift into eight perfectly symmetrical lines.*

Thundercloud, portent of doom, opens the second half with the doubly-shaded way between life and death.

*Chinese poetry's condensation as Freudian dreamwork's condensation: both share the property of collecting the unspeakable at the very surface of things.*

A lonely fisherman, or a suicide-to-be (drowning then was common), keeps a vigil lit over the lake.

*Reading this poem twelve centuries later, its terseness, blood on my tongue from biting at the corners.*

Such a colour in fire extends across the dawn in a fabric of fog: spring's tides, tidings.

*"And if seeing was fire, I required the plenitude of fire, and if seeing would infect me with madness, I madly wanted that madness."*

In the last line, Du Fu names a city and gives Spring a place: Chengdu, the brocade city, now flowerheavy.

*As though from a grave of light, from death springs life.*