

on the first day of the seventh month i write two poems on the water pavilion of district  
judge zhong (1 of 2)

under the mighty beams and within the high windows it is cool  
already the autumn winds test the warmth of my garments  
soon there will be the snow which comes from the yin mountains  
i do not wish to leave this water pavilion and go back to my stuffy office

the clouds moving over the steep mountains look like brocade and embroideries  
the spindly spruces on the far side of the pond are pushed by the wind  
i believe you should be appointed like wang qiao was as district judge of she-xian  
i feel strongly this level of appointment for you will soon be announced by the emperor

murphy keeping up his contacts within the hierarchy  
9/8/2008 12:10 PM

von zach XIV,1

on the first day of the seventh month i write two poems on the water pavilion of district  
judge zhong (2 of 2)

fu-zi-jian in his leisure played music when he was justice of the peace in dan-fu  
zhong-jun threw away his passport because he was confident of appointment in shen-si  
your character has become like that of the zhong family insuring its continuation  
and you lead with the same cheerfulness and competence as did the venerable fu

how marvelous that such a gathering of dignified officials honors you  
yet i wonder how this old unimportant man who writes verses could possibly fit in  
in wu gulch here beside the big river it is always cloudy or rainy  
on the chill mats behind the bamboo screens i watch the guests play go

murphy always the odd man out  
9/20/2008 10:22 AM

von zach XIV,2

on the third day of the seventh month the heat of afternoon bothered me, but i slept soundly in the chill of an evening breeze. i write a poem about this and send it in jest to my young friend, the section head yuan, 21st of his clan.

now once again autumn comes with its cooling days  
the heat of summer has begun to give up its reign  
during my elder years i live as a stranger in the hot south  
yet once again the weather has brought my desires back to life

now i sweat less in the heat of the midday sun, and at night  
i sleep soundly through the clamor of my neighbors  
the evening breeze cools my black cap, my muscles  
though nearly broken down begin to revive again

during this summer my eyes closed for a hundred nights without sleep  
and even the big river could not slake my never ending thirst  
the rain gained my hatred because of its continuing absence  
the demon of drought approached with its dulling steps

the gardens produced few vegetables which were rare as gems  
and one usually found nothing which was worthy of picking  
thick clouds came only a few times but then disappeared  
no rain fell to earth for the entire, interminable season

in antiquity wise zang-wen-zhong proscribed burning witches to bring forth rain  
and duke wu of zhou himself helped victims of heat stroke felled on the street  
now finally ying and yang have switched places as host and guest  
and the seasons have changed again from high heat to become cool

only the final clarity of autumn pleasantly refreshes  
when the oppressive smokes of summer are fully cleared  
then one hears the rushing flight of the wild geese  
flying from the great wall south in their precise formations

i am suddenly reminded of the time in my youth when white frost appeared  
and the steps leading from the gate were covered with slick ice  
i then rode a tatar horse with a curved bow in my arms  
and when my arrow was sent whirring it always found its mark

i pursued the crafty hare with an iron tipped shaft  
the bow became as the full moon when fully drawn  
now in my old age i sing sad songs about the snow in my hair  
gone forever are the places where earlier i indulged my joys

from my window i look over to see your mountain villa  
blurred from the formidable distance which separates us  
my ecstatic friend there prepares his elixir of life  
yet he has as yet refrained from inviting me over

when i was young i pursued only fun and pleasure  
and thought not of elixirs but now that joy has disappeared  
i walk my floor with a cane in this time of war  
old and sick as i am your elixir would be hard put to help such as i

you, however, should gain immortality with its use, like the dragon in the pond  
you are waiting for the opportunity to be lifted to heaven by the divine wind  
i can only hope for a steady sleep which is akin to immortality  
after i seize the brush to form this poem i trust i shall achieve such sleep

murphy kvetching again about the twinges of age  
9/20/2008 2:15 PM

von zach XIV,3

the cattle shepherd and the weaver

the star of the cattle shepherd is west of the milky way  
the star of the weaver lies on the eastern side  
since the oldest times they have stared across at each other  
even on the seventh night of the seventh month they cannot meet

one cannot wait for the union of their miraculous rays  
thus their story seems in the end but an idle fiction  
yet spirits are able to unite instantaneously over far distances  
why should any of these wait until autumn to come together

on double sevens it is said the slender figure of the weaver is bedecked for travel  
and a wagon drawn by dragons awaits her in the heavens  
because of her that evening people come together for shared festivities  
even the children are happy to join in the invocations which are offered

everywhere the parties are celebrated in the family as a group  
from reed-covered huts to the palaces of the highest nobility  
in these palace halls the tables are covered with sacrificial food  
jewelled pendants on the belts of palace women add a somber sound as they enter

everywhere in china clothes are hung out to air on this night  
in belief that the light winds of the lunar light will bring a freshness  
at the party superstitious women believe they gain skills in crafts  
if cobwebs cover the sacrificial fruits, and the spiders collude to make it so

the party begins when the dew first begins to gather on the ground  
and it ends only when the sun shows the first light of a new day  
unfortunately the slender weaver will never be married  
one takes this to heart and gives voice to one's grief

the weaver always protects her body and keeps herself chaste with her loom  
as is the custom for all young women who obey the customs and laws  
although the weaver does not have to provide for the parents of a husband  
she dare not neglect her work of spinning and weaving her webs

her relation to the cattle shepherd is as the loyal connection of ruler and minister  
despite their proximity an offense against ceremony can not be tolerated  
a woman shows all through the public wedding ceremony  
that her love originates in her esteem of her husband

everyone whether rich or poor should marry in the end  
and the ceremony of the occasion must always be observed  
if a marriage should occur without ceremony the shaft does not fit the axe  
and the husband will become a tyrant who disrespects the wife's lapse

murphy bringing the spirit to the people by building his ceremonial fire  
9/21/2008 9:54 AM

von zach XIV,4

in this dreadful heat i send this verse as a letter to my younger cousin on my mother's side, cui, sixteenth of his clan, an officer of the da-li-si

the big fire star refuses to give over to the time of autumn  
the lands of jing and yang have yet to feel a cooling breeze  
the birds in the woods sit with drooping wings  
there are no ships which venture onto the low river waters

in the houses nothing is done but sweeping the ground to sleep upon  
the gates remain closed and all human activity has stopped  
i am an old man who is filled with a hundred worries  
cheerless i sit while strangers fight amongst themselves

in the evenings snakes come brazenly forth  
i am afraid of lying down in darkness on my wretched bed  
but one hates to burn candles during the hot nights  
si i sit sleepless while my thoughts turn to the native country

i open my jacket and think longingly of my cousin cui  
because of the excessive heat i bare my white head  
if i put on a belt it digs into my back sharp as thorns  
even a short walk in the neighborhood is difficult for me

when will the welcome chill of fall finally arrive  
i would greet it then on the tower beside the stream  
where can you and i speak again about the lines of the yi-jing  
where will we again share the recitation of poems

you are distinguished by your restraint and modesty  
you unlike others require nothing extraneous to intrude upon self  
you have been an excellent imperial commissioner  
you stand above others with your righteousness and skills

you are among the officials who are as valuable as the wood from ji and chu  
you stand out as a great racer among the steeds in the imperial stables  
this short poem will inform you of my thoughts of the moment  
and my sad condition will be understood by you, my life-long friend

murphy older and somewhat more embittered  
9/22/2008 8:44 AM

von zach XIV,5

rain, three poems (1 of 3)

now in the early morning clouds rise above the gorges of the yang-zi  
the fogs which hug the ground are reluctant to release their hold  
the wind rises above the broad blue stream  
the rain runs down the sheer cliff walls

the cold has become more and more bitter  
bringing here a continuous roar of thunder  
the temperature of the region has suddenly changed  
the long held heat has finally disappeared

the birds have left their perches within the sopping high trees  
while the people around me have not yet opened their gates  
though the palace of duke xiang of chu is long now gone  
the rain reminds of the sad sounds of his dancer's girdle pendants

the chanberlain of the duke recorded his dreams in verse  
these poetic descriptions surpass in their beauty all others in antiquity  
the blue dragons borne on the wind which bring the rain  
were first described on the wu-shan balcony at that time

murphy unable to experience anything new without a remembrance of past readings  
9/22/2008 10:16 AM

von zach XIV,6



rain, three poems (2 of 3)

this rain has made it impossible to see the green of the mountains  
the shining dews of the season are indiscernible in these downpours  
numerous clouds crowd the sky above the big river  
the sandy banks are awash with the rushing runoff

the unusual customs of this area remind of nesting birds  
high balconies abound which look down on the wind-whipped shore  
a good friend has just left on a long arduous journey  
i am sunk in my thoughts of longing for his presence

i think i see his craft far, far off midst the high waves  
the river is very choppy between the lands of chu and wu  
now during the long rain dragons and reptiles come out everywhere  
i can only trust my friend does not meet up with swarms of robbers

murphy cursed with a lack of mobility in his old age  
9/22/2008 10:29 AM

von zach XIV,7

rain, three poems (3 of 3)

at midnight a change in weather looms over the desolate mountains  
a light breeze blows cold over my my small compound  
but by early morning a whirlwind clears the air  
and all of nature appears in its luxuriant green

the clouds seem to rise from out the mountain caves  
the sky high rocks seem dark and blurred  
the rain removes the glimmer shining on the big river  
where will the sun smash through this darkness

on the river i see mast after mast of ships from jing-zhou  
the soldiers on deck shoulder their spears and hooked lances  
they have the task to defend cao-zhen to the south  
and, pitiably, they are thoroughly drenched on their long trip

the rebels have come down from bi-shan to kui-zhou  
and the general plans to confront them there if he can  
then clouds gleam again in the far distance above the deep river  
the small boats begin to be rowed to their destined places

only the fishing boats remain idle along the shore  
as the foreign songs of the woodcutters rise from the forest  
i am only a feeble old man left here in my loneliness  
i grab the paintbrush and ply it from morning til night

murphy watching the news on television in his glassed in cave  
9/22/2008 12:39 PM

von zach XIV,8

i plant greens in the fall

now finally it has begun to rain again though fall has also arrived. i decided to try to grow a small vegetable patch outside my hall despite the season. i divided the small separate patches of plants with salad greens between. it has already been twenty days and the salad plants have not grown, nor has anything else except the wild spinach. i am saddened that this is so and am reminded that noble men of the present who have only a small salary late in life need such endeavors to work in order to get by. accordingly i have written this poem.

when both yin and yang are mixed with each other  
excessive heat or rain do not pervert the natural world  
however when dryness rules excessively in the south  
these areas are pushed sadly to become brown and to burn

half the vegetation which supports life has died  
and the rice is also nearly gone and withering to the ground  
but then storm clouds suddenly moved in, driven through the skies  
the gods of rain and wind combining their great strengths

they ordered the red shining sun to hide from our eyes  
thick black clouds roiled overhead disturbing the blue heavens  
just before the rain came a roaring, tearing wind  
the driving rain bent everything toward the west

everywhere on the mountains watercourses streamed into the big river  
their thundering noise is still yet ringing in my ears  
it rained the whole day through and into the night and next day  
only after two nights did the noise of the rushing waters begin to fade

but now one can perhaps grow a few plants in a vegetable garden  
i call the servant and tell him to begin work to do so  
salad greens are what i most desire for him to grow  
and ask him to outline the small patches of other plants with their seed

the soil is soon broken up in the small patches as ordered  
all the work is proceeding according to plan  
yet now after twenty days the seeds have not yet risen as plants  
and all around the area i can see only the mud

the only plant to be seen is the wild spinach all around  
i do not know where its seeds come from but it grows in abundance  
perhaps this plant grows late into the fall months  
but eventually even it will be killed by the cold dews

in contrast to lettuce the spinach grows very quickly  
and soon covers much of the ground around my court  
i infer from this that evil will ultimately counteract the good  
and that the good is covered until it cannot sustain life

a man of high moral standing even as he attains office  
sticks to his ethics and resists exploiting others to become rich  
weeds will overgrow magic mushrooms and beautiful orchids  
they do so even more than the hated bushes of thorns

when the garden covers itself with weeds as it has done  
this old gardener is forced to bow his head in shame  
if only wild spinach could be served to rest on jade plates as salad  
or be presented as a precious gift lying on cloud-like silk

yes, if wild spinach cannot be used for such splendid ends  
it must be thrown away to disappear in the basket of rubbish

murphy picking out ripe pears in january flown in from chile  
9/22/2008 3:06 PM

von zach XIV,9

fair weather in the evening

the slant of evening light begins to fade and disappear  
thin clouds not yet retreated to their home above the mountains  
a shining rainbow dips into the stream to drink its distant floods  
the gorges accept the last few drops of today's rains

wild geese and cranes soar high overhead in the winds  
wolves and bears imagine themselves full and fat for the winter  
it is now autumn and i am still far from my home  
later on dew on the bamboo shines in the moonlight

murphy happy, fishing on the riverbank at dusk  
9/22/2008 3:57 PM

von zach XIV,10

overnight in the apartment by the river

evening here, the shadows creep up the mountain path  
here, here in my eagle's nest, close above the water gate  
some few thin clouds tangle the edges of the cliffs  
the bright lonely moon scatters heart on waves

that line of cranes i see stays silent  
though i hear wolves howl over their meat  
i can't find sleep, i worry of war  
how can small i change the world

murphy hard at it over breakfast

6-12-03 8:00 am

von zach XIV, 11

white salt mountain

the mountain rises steeply topped by a mass of peaks  
its foothills interlaced with the swift huang-long-tan stream  
all other mountains sit broadly on the sure earth  
you alone elevate yourself to approach heaven in the sky

a town lies in the foothills with a thousand homes, all white  
countless merchant ships lie at anchor in the chill autumn  
poets are inspired to write verses while here  
but who in the end will spread these words of praise

murphy moved by the muse and spreading her seeds  
9/23/2008 8:46 AM

von zach XIV,12

the yan-yu rock

an immense rock lies here in the middle of the floods  
during the cold season it lies high out of the water  
then a bull is drowned to honor the gods of the rain  
after the rains only the tip of the rock is left to warn off ships

the gods have placed many dangers so men must always take heed  
this rock has been here since the creation of the world from chaos  
because of the war and the riots i must moor my boat at many places  
and i remind myself not to sit at the edge of a hall lest tiles fall on my head

murphy not walking under the painter's ladder  
9/23/2008 9:01 AM

von zach XIV,13



in chu-tang gorge thinking of antiquity

ten thousand streams course their way here from the southwest  
meeting they race through mighty cliffs facing each other like enemies  
the earth has split here down to the roots of the mountains  
to accept the outrush from the west in the lunar caves

both cliff walls rise steeply to the height of the bo-di-cheng fortress  
in a desolate hollow of the gorge lies the yang balcony of duke xiang of chu  
the entrance to this gorge of the da-yu is an extremely large opening  
the immense hand of the creative power is made manifest

murphy taking film snapshots with his old 35mm  
9/23/2008 10:34 AM

von zach XIV,14

yellow grass gorge

the ships which have gone from the gorge west to si-chuan  
have not returned, not one person has returned to kui-zhou  
here at the foot of the chi-jia mountain few men are seen  
they have all gone as soldiers to fight in si-chuan

alas, we have also learned nothing of the fate of li-zhi-fang  
the imperial commissioner held in cheng-du-fu by the rebels  
we know there have been battles in cheng-du-fu  
but we have heard little of their outcome, and all of it contradictory

we have had the autumn winds spread their rain over ten thousand miles  
all the tributaries have greatly swelled the size of the big river  
goodbyes were said everywhere to the young men moving out to battle  
the gauze garments of the women were awash with bitter tears

do not give up hope that all will have been be lost  
sword gate pass will not remain in the hands of the rebels  
i have recently heard a small bit of good news  
the city of song-zhou has been encircled by our brave men

murphy reading tea leaves in a vain effort to foresee the future  
9/23/2008 10:49 AM

von zach XIV,15

in the company of the chief censor bo-zhen-jie, governor of kui-zhou, i watch the officers  
and men share a banquet, two poems (1 of 2)

the officers and men are festive in their exuberant behavior  
who would think they have only recently seen a hundred battlefields  
they certainly deserve the abundant feast you have graciously provided  
they sit long with you, the bearer of the golden seal, in intimate entertainment

i am drunk from repetitively emptying my mug formed from a mussel shell  
the dancers twirl in their costumes festooned with images of the phoenix  
since you recently arrived here as an imperial commissioner  
the troops have been royally entertained with dancing, food, and plenteous drink

murphy thankful for the feast, seated in the back of the hall  
9/23/2008 11:37 AM

von zach XIV,16

in the company of the chief censor bo-zhen-jie, governor of kui-zhou, i watch the officers  
and men share a banquet, two poems (2 of 2)

the edge of the canopy is decorated with richly embroidered silk  
golden flowers are inlaid on the bodies of the musician's drums  
a soldier rises and performs an intricate sword dance  
a choir of a hundred voices sing songs of the woodsmen of kui-zhou

this city lies midst trees on the banks of the big river, isolated and abandoned  
you are the first commissioner to come here from chang-an for a long time  
the emperor's court has appointed several military leaders for the fight against the enemy  
now they have picked a man comparable to he-qu-bing in the time of the han

murphy giving flattery where it is richly deserved  
9/23/2008 1:29 PM

von zach XIV,17

respectfully i receive a personal letter from prince li-yu from han-zhong wherein he informs me of the death of censor wei and the taoist priest xiao

this autumn xiao and wei have died which has occasioned a letter to me  
li-yu the prince of han-zhong has reached his hand to the gorges of the yang-zi  
it is hard to believe that a second lao-zi such as wei should die while still young  
and that xiao did not benefit from his devotion to the elixir of life

both these deaths are regretted by all learned men of today  
and they remind me that my way in this life is nearing its end  
this pain of mourning merely adds to my great sickness  
they were both my friends since my childhood

everywhere i hear flutes in the neighborhood which bring back memories  
and i continue to wander this earth like the wind blown thistledown  
i force myself to sing the sad fu of pan-yo on the recollection of old friends  
i who have the long memories and white hair of an old man

murphy watching his cronies fall one by one  
9/24/2008 9:49 AM

von zach XIV,18

i look in the mirror and seal these verses to be given to chief censor bo-zhen-jie

the wei river flows in shen-si where i long to be  
there also lie the zhong-nan mountains near beloved chang-an  
my energies were lost in the caves of tigers and wolves in si-chuan  
my tears fell there in the alien lands of the barbarians

now in my sickness i arise too late to serve as an official  
and my slow faltering steps preclude my becoming one with the immortals  
in the mirror i see only a delapidated, withered old face  
perhaps my old friend bo-zhen-jie will look upon me with compassion

murphy wondering how long into old age a stiff upper lip will last  
9/24/2008 10:06 AM

von zach XIV,19

i listen to the songstress yang

i am listening to a beautiful young woman sing wonderfully well  
she stands before the assembled crowd and bares her white teeth in a smile  
the guests in the hall are saddened and do not applaud  
the sad sounds seem to come down from the heavens on high

moonlight beams onto the town beside the big river  
the song is even more sad because it rises into such a bright night  
the elderly people in the audience lament their growing so old  
the young are moved to the copious tears of their fresh emotions

the jade mugs of wine are forgotten for a while  
the gilt flutes stumble in their notes overwhelmed by the song's power  
it is not as if only the listeners are struck dumb  
everything, the gates and the very air seem frozen in their place

did not the outstanding people in antiquity wish for one special friend  
one who would be able to touch their hearts with understanding  
i have heard that once the songstress qin-qing  
was able to capture the ear of the entire world

murphy quieting self to let nature intrude  
9/24/2008 10:32 AM

von zach XIV,20

on an autumn day in kui-zhou i sing of my feelings. i respectfully offer these verses to zheng-shen, the sub-director of the secret archives, and to li-zhi-fang, the master of ceremonies for the crown prince. poem in 100 rhymes.

to the north of the black barbarians on the outermost border  
here where the lonely fort of the white emperor lies  
i still try to walk every day within the broad area of kui-zhou  
but for the last three years here i have been ill with an insatiable thirst

but now like a sword rattling in an open box i feel my spirits rise  
and i have loaded my heaps of books and writings onto a docked ship  
the heart of this refugee from the unrest finds little amusement in life  
the days of an aging man are sad indeed, and lonesome

i have always endeavored to provide for my wife and children  
but time has taken my best days and left me broken and weak  
yet i have seen many beautiful sights in my wanderings  
and i have endeavored to keep up my creative powers in poetry

the great river springs forth from a narrowness of gorge  
and where the rocks become more open old trees have spread  
rising high toward the clouds they darken the air of zhu  
and then on to the sea the stream flows under the sky of wu

here salt is quickly prepared by boiling the water of salt springs  
by burning the undergrowth one makes the dry land quite fertile  
one may often be frightened by the piles of mountain ranges overhead  
then one looks frantically for the coming of a level bank area

mandarin ducks play in the waters, most often in pairs  
monkeys hang down in groups from the branches of the trees  
long tendrils of green ivy remind one of hanging girdle bands  
strewn on the shore are stones of striped granite small as copper coins

here the spring grass never wilts from dryness nor cold  
and blossoms continue to delight during the colder seasons  
the hunters all around stoke the everburning guard fires  
hostels in the country all pipe in drinking water from nearby mountains

the people wake me here and i scratch sparse white hair  
i have worn out countless shoes walking with my cane  
in the capitals of chang-an and lo-yang i still have a little property  
but alas all my old friends and patrons are gone



for a time in the past i served yan wu as his personal secretary  
and then had the good fortune of working in the employment bureau  
but then just as the melons were becoming ripe i was removed  
and began to float again like a waterchestnut with nothing to hold onto

my medicines lie before me now in a tangled mess  
but really the brisk winds of autumn will do more for my health  
i would open my heart to one who will ease my suffering  
he who would clear all the fogs and clouds from my being

a gala banquet is given as a politeness from the governor  
the honored guests of kui-zhou are treated to beautiful singing girls  
as i sit to enjoy, the plaintive pipa saddens this sick old man  
though the banquet hall would be the envy of the immortal geniuses

now we hear melodies created in the southern palace in the kai-yuan period  
those which originated in the emperor's pear garden opera troop  
these taoistic songs intertwine melodies in several voices  
all the audience are moved to shed copious tears

i sit in the cloud of my loneliness here in kui-zhou  
the longing for my home village of du-ling overwhelms  
once only the wei river flowed through the long-jiu gate at chang-an  
cursed was the day the same gate let in the stinking turfan

men like geng-yan and jia-fu supported the imperial house during the late han  
men like xiao-he and cao-can assembled round the throne of the great su-zong  
relying on the imperial prestige they exterminated the wasps and scorpions  
with their combined forces they swooped like kites and falcons

the traditional possessions of the dynasty survived in their vastness  
but even this did not change the wickedness of the rebels  
the government was determined to continue the fight to exterminate the aliens  
but the people were tired and desired a return to normalcy and peace

but what should slaves know but what they have been told  
the beneficence of the emperor had given them a false sense of power  
the star of the western barbarians came roaring like a comet  
and the chinese people found themselves sore in their need

the emperor issued painful edicts assuming blame for the tragedy  
he began to abolish all the laws considered oppressive  
the new rule began in the first year of dai-zhong's trip to shen-zhou  
he wrapped himself there in the expectations of the holidays

the new regulations promulgated by the emperor were carefully constructed  
the assistance offered to the throne on high was perfectly prepared  
zhou-wen-wang brought back the wise tai-gong instead of bears and wolves  
and the people praised zhou-xuan-wang because dai-zhong used good men

i listen with reverence to the speeches of the ruler of this rebirth  
with a long drawn out sigh i wish for men such as you to fill the needs of this time  
letters have often come to me from zheng in jiang-ling  
and from my friend li who lives a thousand miles away

the poetry of you both have been praised throughout the land  
your literary abilities far outshine the modicum i possess  
your poems have always shown a clarity and cleanness of form  
it is as if we had another shen-quan-qi side by side with song-zhi-wen

the melody of your verses reminds of the bamboo flutes of the kun-lun mountains  
the music of your poems resemble the slow and quick string playing of han-ying  
the independence of your styles has been praised by all  
one forgets sometimes the relevance of your models to the poetry of antiquity

your hospitality, zheng, can be compared to that of zheng-dang-shi of han times  
you, li, have attained honors comparable to the estimable li-ying of yore  
and even though i am not qualified now to participate in ceremonies  
i have not forgotten the kind treatment you both have given me

and because of your honorable points of view others gather round you  
they come without prejudice to praise your high morality  
the horses who come to the capital are all first class racers  
the call of the cranes demonstrate well they come only from the qing-tian mountains

you, oh li, came to be the master of ceremonies for the crown prince  
and have only recently been fitted for your special brocade coat  
you, oh zheng, came from dung-guan to be sub-manager of the secret archives  
and have taken your new silk hat into the seclusion of your position

in your leisure, oh li, you are said to write poems on the walls of your house  
while you, oh zheng, beat time for your songs on the hull of your boat  
you both take time to visit places with marvelous scenery  
and you write me letters with your verses on flower scented paper

many times now i feel as if i should retire to my loneliness  
but unfortunately i am held back from this ease by my many worries  
i feel that my entire life has been wasted and served no purpose  
and added to this is the precarious state of the empire today

my beloved straw hut in cheng-du-fu has been laid waste  
all the places i found pleasure have been taken from me  
the pain of separation from my brothers and sisters is especially deep  
on the holidays my inability to sacrifice to my ancestors brings copious tears

chrysanthemums in the capital of chang-an are beautiful when glistening with dew  
the foliage of the autumn vegetables throw broad shade in the eastern capital lo-yang  
who now can speak to me about the glories of the past  
how many new cemeteries are filled with my old friends

i have given up striving for wealth and the respect of officialdom  
in this noisy fight for existence i no longer respond to the crack of the whip  
yet while the dust of the war and its battles fills the air in thick clouds  
the moon still gleams with its old beauty between the rivers jiang and han

in my confined movements these days i still watch the swallows of autumn  
and i look forward to the last sounds of the cicada before the winter  
and the modern stylist lurking in my brush has not forgotten you  
in your letters you always ask about me, this old sickly person that's left

i envy yan-zun his house built with the riches he earned as a soothsayer  
in my house i have only a carpet left behind by the barbarian raiders  
if my pocket becomes empty i must sell hairpins and bracelets  
when the rice is used up i must ask my wife to sell her headdress for money

yet oranges in my garden prosper in the shade of their glossy leaves  
though the roof of my humble hut here has barely 8 or 9 rafters  
ruins from the war of zhu-ge-liang lie on the sandy shore north of kui-zhou  
while the jetty for mooring ships lies on the spit of nag-xi

my heart maintains a continual depression caused by separation from my homeland  
yet this long period of enforced rest has seen a betterment of my overall health  
various herbs harvested in the min mountains have helped my congested lungs  
as well as the lotus plant which comes from ponds of the lu family in zhe-giang

the pears which grow around have rosier cheeks than those of a pretty girl  
and chestnuts are almost fist size and in a luxuriant fullness  
yet there is only a small courtyard to supply my kitchen with most things  
and if i were to feel full i would eat eel three times a day

the children often go down to watch the fish traps to amuse themselves  
when guests come to visit i can only offer horse blankets to sit upon  
the narrow door to the house is formed of wood slats tied together  
water drips down from the towering bamboo onto entering guests

the ditch around my home fronts on state fields  
the village leans against the wall of a landed cloister  
the gaps in my fence are filled with thornbushes  
overhanging rocks thwart attempts to climb over them

i ask myself is it necessary to always go to audience early in the morning  
or whether it is permissible to sleep soundly until midday  
who could say when it is too far to go to reach the court  
and i can build up my strength by staying in kui-zhou

i haven't worn the imperial silver embroidered uniform for a very long time  
i think with longing on the times i spent in the clouds of incense at the ministry  
for both of you the violet phoenix is always near to fly to the heights  
whereas for me i am content to see a yellow sparrow return to his nest in my tree

my education was such that i am now out of touch with modern times  
you, however, the enlightened, must muster your forces for the emperor  
your fame has already penetrated to the innermost court  
sooner or later you will both become treasured ministers

you will choose frank advisers for the throne, as did kuang-heng  
you will recognize important scholars as well, as did fu-jian  
you will offer your deeply felt true opinions to the emperor  
and thereby perhaps the government will continue its improvement

the emperor now is full of grief and restlessness, eating only after sundown  
the people as a whole are generally miserable and afflicted with illness  
on the cloud balcony you may be consulted the whole day through  
who else but you and others like you are fit to have biographies in the historical works

the strain on me to travel to visit you will be difficult  
but i will persist in my resolve to see you with my own eyes  
quick oars are always ready to begin such a journey  
and this time i will remember to bring weapons to oppose any robbers

for a long time now i have wanted to withdraw into a cloister in the mountains  
as a philosophy i lean toward the contemplation of the seven buddhist patriarchs  
after my arrival in the enclave i wish to consider the history of the past  
wearing my hair shirt i will dig into the texts of antiquity

zheng, your fame is like that of the brilliant xie-an in the jin dynasty  
you, oh li, are like the hospitable zhao-wang whose guests gathered round  
on my way to you i will not wail as did once ruan-ji not knowing his way  
but will reach my goal as once did the renowned zhang-jian

there are still clouds which must be parted to effect our reunion  
yet i must stay here for only a bit longer for my health  
in the end my ship will cut the waves with favorable winds  
and the water monsters will be unable to throw up too much foam

soon enough i will say goodbye to the wu-shan fairy here  
and will hear no more the call of the cuckoo in the spring  
our pure friendship will continue whether we eventually meet or not  
but i so wish to move through waters from my cloister to your side

i have always felt akin to the kas'yapa buddha reincarnated as lao-zi  
i have always found repose apprenticed to the geniuses of the dao  
the spit of the incense cauldron shines in my imagination of the lu mountains  
the well of oranges is yet to be found in the higher reaches of the ma-ling

in the east i wish to walk to liao-dung where ding-ling-wei returned as a crane  
to the south i want to see where ma-yuan threw a vulture to the waves  
lately i have heard of available apprenticeships in buddhist monasteries  
with this last journey i wish to correct some of my earlier mistakes

gu-kai-zhi was glorified in the picture by wang-che  
he has written a beautiful grave inscription for the dhuta temple  
all possible fragrances rise from the depths of these marvelous sites  
how many more cloisters will i see in their settings of shining greens

brave determination shall become the purpose of my heart  
and if i do not nurture it my weak body will become even thinner  
but i fear i use the golden knife in vain to sting the star of ignorance  
i cannot free my heart from doubting thoughts of the reality of this world

murphy revisiting the angst of his teenage identity crisis  
9/27/2008 10:37 AM

von zach XIV,21

life and death, impromptu poems in two stanzas (1 of 2)

the daist priest xi-qian is no longer seen playing chess, yet he still lives  
however, one still finds new poems from the dead poet bi-yao  
how many people laughed during earlier days around the go board of xi-qian  
how few mourn at the grave of bi-yao where the white poplar tree stands

murphy lurking out of sight and thus out of mind  
9/28/2008 10:40 AM

von zach XIV,22

life and death, impromptu poems in two stanzas (2 of 2)

the painter of nature zheng-qian has passed into the everlasting night  
the painter of horses cao-ba has already become an old man  
where in the world are landscapes like those of zhen-qian produced today  
while the worth of a horse painted by cao-ba is now inestimable

murphy checking off his list of friends who have gone  
9/28/2008 10:47 AM

von zach XIV,23

i give my younger cousin, fifteenth of his clan, an escort as he leaves as censor to serve as imperial commissioner at cheng-du-fu

your progress in the literary arts pleases me greatly  
i am deeply moved with the woe of resignation as you leave  
we drink together the departing mugs of local wine  
now your boat will be pulled up by ropes to your destination

the fights of the rioting wolves still rage around cheng-du-fu  
i aged quickly in my time there and was unable to help stop the fighting  
you as a young man can make the return trip to chang-an easily  
you should be able to report to the emperor concerning the ringleaders this autumn

murphy cheering from the sidelines while muscle memory twitches through his frame  
9/28/2008 10:59 AM

von zach XIV,24



i give this poem to gung-cao officer li as i escort him on his journey to jing-zhou to  
replace censor zheng as auditor.

when first i learned that song-yu's house was in jing-zhou  
i wished to visit there and have always kept this desire since  
here in kui-zhou i spend difficult days in my advanced age  
i now rage against the coming of autumn as did once song-yu

when you are there in you can stand on the famed balcony on one column  
and admire the sun setting over more than nine arms of the river  
although your position brings with it much prestige and glory  
you will find sadness in the sight of the green maple woods so far from your homeland

murphy letting go some of the treasured dreams of his youth  
9/28/2008 11:15 AM

von zach XIV,25

i say goodbye to cui who travels to hu-nan and send at the same time these verses for xie-ju and meng-yun-qing

a prudent man travels far only when it is necessary  
but when a good friend calls one is hard pressed not to go  
afterall one cannot spend one's entire life seeking perfection  
by protecting oneself from the contamination of the outside world

one hears day and night from everyone how much the emperor needs good men  
now that you have been chosen to fly you must hurry to help save the country  
in jing-zhou you will meet both my friends xie-ju and men-yun-qing  
please tell them of my desire to once again discuss poetry with them

murphy still able to pull strings in the old boy's network  
10/1/2008 9:10 AM

von zach XIV,26

from my wretched hut in the yang-zi gorges i respectfully dedicate these verse to my  
fourth uncle on my maternal side (the censor) as he leaves for li-zhou and zhang-zhou

the sun of autumn sinks behind kui-zhou on the shore of the big river  
silence reigns, even the mountain goblins remain quiet in their dens  
my uncle has interrupted his trip to stay here for a few days  
he has chosen to visit this old man in his miserable hut

the world continues to be disturbed by the rebellious insurgents  
and those who could help me in my plight are unable to do so  
please inform the people of the peach blossom spring in lang-zhou  
that i continue to lead the fabled life of the hermits in qin times

murphy making the best out of a broken play in the fourth quarter of a tie game  
10/1/2008 9:26 AM

von zach XIV,27

have you not seen? verses i send to su-xi instead of a letter

have you not seen the parasol tree on the shore of of the desolate pond  
have you not seen the the chestnut tree with its many broken limbs  
it is true that the wood from a tree dead for a hundred years  
can still be carved into a marvelous flute with a beautiful sound

but in an old water puddle next to that desolate pond  
a wise young dragon may yet be hidden within its mud  
only if the coffin of a man is is finally closed  
can one say that his work in this world is truly at an end

you fortunately are not an old shell of a man like me  
and have the strength and wisdom to serve the emperor well  
how piteous it is that despite your abilities and desires  
you atrophy within the loneliness of your mountain retreat

you should resist the temptation to remain in your isolation  
and come out of through the deep valleys of your desolate mountains  
there you will find nothing to extend and flesh out your being  
nothing but thunderclaps, demons, and the wildness of storms

murphy forced to give advice from the sidelines while aching to get into the fray  
10/1/2008 1:09 PM

von zach XIV,28

i dedicate these verses to su-xi, fourth of his clan

earlier while walking together near the district of foreigners  
we spoke of how we are both tired of being thistledown blown by the winds  
it is the first time we have seen each other for five long years  
and we are still forced to wander about without surcease

the riots of war are hopefully winding down to their end  
and the imperial coach has again returned to the capital  
i am forced to consider my destiny as i am approaching my end  
why i ask are talented men of your caliber without a steady position

earlier i was given the responsibility of an official position  
but i lost that position and have been afflicted since by lingering illness  
and why is your face so dark and careworn when turned to mine  
how can you expect me to show my happiness at seeing you again

the land of si-chuan is continually perturbed by the raids of the insurgents  
the citizens are reduced to acting as silly geese in order to survive  
though the lands of yu and xi have been afforded a time of rest  
the use of the curved bow and arrow still rules in si-chuan

now you have left si-chuan and have come here to the yang-zi gorges  
could this not be compared to how once ma-rong brought his ethics to the east  
although the world is large and affords many opportunities  
everywhere i go i cannot find a living and remain very poor

everywhere the meat eaters despise the poor vegetarians  
and the strong young people push aside all older men  
this is all the more so when a man is a guest in an alien country  
there one is always pushed aside by the local men of the land

now you will travel from here to jing-zhou and yang-zhou  
you are a lonely sailor much like a lonesome wild goose  
both these districts are richly served by many brave men  
there the people and horses are proud and daring

yet i would ask you to also pay attention to the poor and the downtrodden  
they are hungry and cold and would benefit from your wisdom and strength

murphy the monday morning armchair quarterback par excellence

von zach XIV,29

i take leave of su-xi who proceeds to the headquarters in hu-nan

your father, my oldfriend, has a wanderer for a son  
who stayed in the desolation of si-chuan among the abandoned people  
early on i fully expected your skills and dexterity would bring success  
but unfortunately all of your plans have gone for naught

for ten long years you have not soared high on your wings  
if i did not have such admiration for you i would have castigated your failures  
and because of my heavy affliction by diabetes i have been unable to help you  
this has brought much shame to this decrepit old man

who would have thought that the commanding general in hunan would send for you  
he once served ith your father and myself and needs a young phoenix such as yourself  
the phoenix finds its food by flying around the pale bamboo  
and finds its branch to sit upon within the broad chestnut trees

the lodestar of the emperor's position controls the whole world  
he has sent the general to hu-nan to the center of the big river and the lakes  
the empire is darkened by the smoke and dust of the rioting  
in hu-nan one needs new conscripts to be trained for the war effort

you will be in a position to advise the general concerning his duties in hu-nan  
and hopefully the outcome of his efforts will reflect well on his headquarters  
and in parting i give you a ceremonial whip like once did rao-zhao  
but caution you to use it lightly and never on young colts newly harnessed

murphy chary with his advice to the younger generation  
10/2/2008 2:15 PM

von zach XIV,30

wanderings of my youth

as a young man of barely fourteen i felt ready  
and stepped out onto the battlefield of brush and ink  
the learned confucianists cui-shang and wei-qi and others  
compared me to the authors ban-gu and yang-xiong

even when i was seven i was already concerned with heroic deeds  
my first verses were praiseful songs for the fabled phoenix  
by nine i was able to form large characters of beauty  
and my poetry stacked high enough to fill a bag

i was from the first wild in my temperament and showed a love of wine  
i hated all that was bad and my heart was filled with sincerity  
i didn't care to mingle as friends with my contemporaries  
but rather chose to associate only with experienced graybeards

mellowed by wine i was carefree, even reckless in my outlook  
and all the common people were to me only a blurred background buzz  
that was when i moved to the city of su-zhou, and then further east  
i was beginning to prepare for an extended sea voyage

to this day i reproach meself for not continuing this adventure  
my plans were to visit the fabled islands of far off japan  
in su-zhou the memories of wang-dao and xie-an lay in the distant past  
even the grave-mound of prince he-lu had become neglected

yet the encircling wall around the sword lake still protruded its odd skew angle  
and the lotus blossoms of chang-zhou park still spread their fragrance  
north of the chang gate a memorial temple stood imposingly on a hill  
this marvelous forefather temple of wu-tai-bo was reflected in the lake below

i often came to to pay my respect to this honorable man  
thinking of his refusal of the throne often brought me to tears  
i thought of gou-jian ever alert sleeping on his lance  
and the indomitable first emperor of qin coming south and crossing the zhe

i heard the history of the assassin zhuan-zhu hiding his dagger in a large boiled fish  
and the seal on the belt of zhu-mai-chen which so impressed the lesser officials  
i remember the girls of yue-zhou being the fairest in the world  
and how the wind over the reflecting lake felt chilly into the fifth month

the beauty of the yan gorge never failed to delight with its charms  
and even when i had to end my visit the beauty of the region stayed with me  
i returned to the north on a boat which passed by the tian-mu mountains  
i was in the prime of my early life and prepared to take the examinations

in my pride i thought i was far stronger than qu-yuan and jia-yi  
and felt i had a slight advantage over cao-zhi and liu-zheng  
but despite my expectations i was failed by the bureau of examinations  
and left the headquarters of the governor of lo-yang accompanied by no one

i wandered slowly through the lands of chi and zhao  
dressed in a fur coat and riding a fine horse  
in the spring i sang songs on the cong balcony  
and in the winter i went hunting with ching-qiu in shan-dung

i hunted with falcons in the woods of zao-li  
and pursued game in the hills of yun-xue  
i shot at flying birds having let free the horse's reins  
pulling back the curve of the bow the crane was already falling

when count su-yuan-ming saw this he rose in his saddle and smiled  
it seemed to him he was in the presence of another go-qiang  
i spent eight or nine years indulging these amusements  
but then i finally decided to return to chang-an

there my friends praised me as a master of literature  
i was invited on extravagant excursions by the worthy prince li-jin  
my careful steps led me up into the banquets of this worthy man  
he afforded me the chance to offer my poetic descriptions to the imperial palace

the emperor was kind enough to send for me  
numerous dignitaries assembled to hear my work  
i left them with no further thought of position or salary  
i indulged heavily in wine and was indifferent to their response

my fortunes plummeted and my sable coat became ragged with wear  
my hair turned white and i kept toasting others with a wine cup in my hand  
my old village of du-ling lost all the elders i had known  
all around were their graves surrounded by white weeping willows

the longer i remained the more honored i became as an elder  
i began to mourn the swift passage of my time on earth  
this was when the rich and powerful murdered and plundered  
but in the end they and their families met their just ends



the imperial studs ate all the grain collected as taxes  
imperial cockfights used the rice and millet meant for the people  
these are merely example of the pointless squandering of resources  
the lessons of history were ignored and waste lead to decline

then came the storm of war in the north of huang-he  
and the emperor xuan-zong was forced to move to si-chuan  
there then arose two courts with separate imperial guards  
their affection for each other was evident across their vast separation

the emperor su-zong gathered brave troops in the area of ping-liang  
the flags of the young emperor became brown from the dust of the desert  
at once xuan-zong handed over the government to su-zong  
who moved personally against the armies of an-lu-shan

the imperial banners were concentrated in the wu mountains  
and fighting like dragons and tigers they defeated the rebels there  
but when the imperial troops faltered only a bit  
the rebels were invigorated and attacked once more

the imperial army became hard-pressed and pinned down  
the misery of the common people became more and more desperate  
i tried to help as a supernumerary official for the emperor  
i was filled with indignation of the destruction and the plight of the people

at that time i knelt on the green mat before the emperor himself  
and spoke urgently to him about my anxieties  
the burning of the nine forefather temples and the plight of the comon people  
and the emperor became angry and dismissed me

yet even then the emperor was the embodiment of benevolence and sagacity  
and shortly after the empire regained a measure of peace  
i participated in the lamentation for the ashes of the imperial temples  
all the officlals shared the misery in the wei-yang palace

then i was finally dismissed and my advice was no longer wanted  
old and ill i proceeded to wander in distant areas  
i shared my sadness with the poor wounded birds  
whose wings were broken and could no longer fly

the autumn winds rushed through my desolate valleys  
and for me the green herbs began to lose their smell  
i looked for no rewards for having retired into exile  
and lived like a hermit beside the river in a hut

even the fullness of an earned glory cannot last  
at the end of the year the bitter frost nips all who live  
i now believe fan li is our greatest hope for success  
and i trust he will finally succeed in supressing the rebellion

murphy careful in the selection of anecdote from his vast memory bank  
10/4/2008 10:55 AM

von zach XIV,31

the fortress at bo-di-cheng

above the city of kui-zhou is a fortress whose gates issue clouds  
below this edifice torrents of rain rush to engorge the big river  
it rushes high and swollen between the steep gorges  
the noise it makes is that of angry thunderclaps

behind the old trees and the entwining green vines  
the fog dims both the sun and the moon with its murk  
horses which are ridden out to battle in far fields  
do not show the same fire as when they turn toward home

now from a thousand families only a hundred are left  
the miserable widows left alone to be squeezed by high taxes  
in all the surrounding villages in this gloomy time of autumn  
one hears only moans and loud lamentations

murphy empathetic and surrounded by suffering  
10/4/2008 11:43 AM

von zach XIV,32

rain

the countless trees run up into the lowering clouds  
the rain persists through the surrounding mountains  
the gate is closed but swings open with these winds  
water birds fly past, then circle back again

the rushing of the rain reminds me of the noisy looms of the sea nymphs  
or possibly lumberjacks chopping up the wet wood of their boats  
the air is chill and has blown away the hot, toxic miasma  
oh, to stand on the balcony of the fortress above the rain, to see the view

murphy inordinately affected by the dank, clammy weather  
10/4/2008 5:20 PM

von zach XIV,33

fair weather after the rain

when the mountain begins to reappear after the rain it is still unchanged  
only after the weather has again become perfect can one see the fresh washed gorges  
here at the end of the world i see nothing else but foreign ways  
and the sight of the autumnal stream brings a crushing melancholy

the many apes keep up their endless cries which sadden me  
and i have no faithful dog to carry my messages as once did lu-zhi  
my sad eyes turn inward to envision my old home country  
i sing slow sad songs to myself and indulge my continuing depression

murphy picking the scab of an itching wound  
10/4/2008 5:33 PM

von zach XIV,34

my hair is almost completely white

my hair is almost as white as that of feng-tang in the han dynasty  
in the clarity of autumn i am saddened as was once song-yu  
i am perpetually kept from sleeping by the rushing water of the river  
so i spend a great deal of my time pacing on the high tower

how can i, this broken old man, possibly help the empire in its need  
being so far away from home merely intensifies my weakness and ill health  
i would like to drink deeply with pleasure to a drunkenness of a thousand days  
but that might lead to maudlin verses like some drunken poets of the past

murphy carefully rationing the best of his saki  
10/4/2008 5:52 PM

von zach XIV,35

in the women's room of the palace

in the women's room of the palace the gems of the girdle sashes are still  
yang-gui-fei is dead and the sad autumn wind rises over the desolate jade  
now in chang-an the new moon rises still where once she watched  
and the dragon pond remains as full as when the emperor struggled

but now my boat is anchored far away from my beloved capital  
and i can't hear the pure hourly sounds i once heard from my office  
countless miles from here to the north is the garden of the huang-shan palace  
there the grave of the emperor lies overcast and frosted with rime

murphy in the melancholy throes of memory  
10/5/2008 4:35 PM

von zach XIV,36

once

once the imperial procession could be seen leaving the peng-lai palace  
they often passed through the green east gate of the capital chang-an  
marvelous, brilliant flowers were planted at the base of the trees  
even the dragons of the still pond were pleased by the nature of the departure

at sundown the emperor yang-gui-fei would stop his entourage  
while a light breeze sprang up he embraced the sisters chin and guo  
but i having no real connection to such affairs  
only know a few things about the mysterious joys of the court

murphy filling in the blanks about the life of the hollywood stars  
10/6/2008 9:44 AM

von zach XIV,37



an excellent painter

mao-yan-zhou was an excellent painter  
and the chamberlain guo was an excellent archer  
both were applauded loudly by the emperor  
who bestowed his mercy as does the coming of spring

the imperial government flowed as a quiet stream  
the imperial justice was shown through the examinations  
competitions were regularly organized for everyone's amusement  
and yet annoying riots and uprisings arose in the background

murphy reading tea leaves to get ahead of the curve  
10/6/2008 9:56 AM

von zach XIV,38

cock fighting

under emperor tang-ming-huang gamecocks were first dressed in brocade  
that was a time when horses were trained to mount board scaffolding  
harem ladies appeared behind screens and sang their special songs  
they were famous for chin-zheng-lou written by the emperor

yet everything came to a sad end at the time of the emperor's death  
from that time on the perfume of the singers was no longer enjoyed  
the road from the hua-qing palace to the li-shan mountains was abandoned  
and now the chill autumn yellows the vegetation all along the way

murphy hearing about the big party he missed over the weekend  
10/6/2008 10:10 AM

von zach XIV,39

many and diverse the joys

many and diverse the joys of the kai-yuan period  
they stood before our eyes clearly and distinctly  
yet without a warning the rebellion began  
and since then much time has passed us by

the wu gulch where i now find myself is in the upper yang-zi gorges  
far from chang-an it is near the northern bushel of the zodiac  
my hair has become white while serving as a ministerial secretary  
and now i find myself tied up with illness and restricted to bed

murphy succumbing to the melancholy of a fading physicality  
10/6/2008 10:20 AM

von zach XIV,40

lo-yang

once the capital at lo-yang fell into the hands of an-lu-shan  
the tatar cavalry immediately attacked the fortress at the tung-guan pass  
then the emperor was overwhelmed with anguished thoughts  
when he fled to si-chuan the people of chang-an were thrown into despair

later after the tatars retreated from chang-an blowing their trumpets  
the emperor came back to the capital from his palace in the mountains  
the old people rejoiced and were suffused with happiness  
to once more have the emperor be seen amongst the populace

murphy enjoying the ride on the teeter-totter with his grandchild  
10/6/2008 10:30 AM

von zach XIV,41

the pleasure palace on li-shan mountain

the pleasure palace on li-shan mountain no longer awaits the emperor  
the hua-e tower is no longer used for gay festivities  
the emperor is dead and buried and holds morning audience no more  
but among the people the gold he has given away can still be found

the dragons left behind in this world by the emperor have gone into hiding  
golden geese now swim in the mercury pond all around his grave  
the sun which shone so long on his peng-lai palace  
appears now over his grave protected by the yu-lin guard

murphy on a fifth year pilgrimage to his father's grave  
10/6/2008 10:41 AM

von zach XIV,42

the lands of the fief princes

the numerous lands of the fief princes ranked within the dynasty  
have all remained loyal to the reigning emperor  
yet i would like to ask if the people might be governed sparely with virtue  
and the troops be used to defend more the threatened points

those now under the new emperor must call competent men to the court  
and follow their advice, then you need not fear incursions of the barbarians  
i wish you would be as careful with weapons as one should be with fire  
then you would let extensive mercy come down to nurture the people

murphy remembering how it was to go hungry as a child  
10/6/2008 10:52 AM

von zach XIV,43