

Fun with Tang Dynasty Poetry: "Peach Blossoms at Dalin Temple"

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Peach Blossom at Dalin Temple

By Bai Juyi

In June of the human realm, all fragrant and beautiful flowers have disappeared,
But the mountain temple's peach blossoms have just begun to bloom.
I have always complained spring is nowhere to be found when it is gone.
I didn't know that spring simply moved up here.

About Bai Juyi

Bai Juyi, also known as Bai Letian, was a renowned poet during the Tang Dynasty. He lived from 772 to 846 A.D. The less educated people of that time could easily understand the language used in his poems, with their explicit themes. The poems flowed so smoothly and his poetic style was so unique that it became a literary form commonly known as the Fundamentally Plain Form.

Bai Juyi excelled in different forms of poetry, especially narrative and lengthy poems. Among his best works are: "Song of Eternal Sorrow," a long poem describing the rise and fall of the famed beauty Royal Concubine Yang Yuhuan, and "Song of the Pipa Player" about a pear-shaped Chinese lute. Throughout the ages, poetry critics have eulogized

"Song of Eternal Sorrow" as an extremely beautiful poem.

About this poem:

Bai Yuyi wrote this poem in the summer of the 12th year of Yuanhe Period (817 A.D.) of Emperor Xian Zong's reign in the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 A.D.) He wrote it when he was working as a low-level government official in Jiangzhou. This poem is a genuine literary treasure of the Tang Dynasty. Dalin Temple refers to an ancient Buddhist temple on Xianglu Ridge of Lu Mountain.

The Author's Interpretation

Nature's clock on mountains and plains at high altitude runs behind the one at lower altitudes. Naturally, flowers blossom later on the high mountains. This is a very natural phenomenon, but Bai Juyi was able to describe it with a few simple words while establishing an ethereal and refreshing atmosphere. This poem truly shows Bai Juyi's creativity and ingenuity. There is elegance in his humor, which makes this poem all the more charming. He has made spring an innocent, cute and vivacious creature that hides herself up in a high mountain. In doing so, Bai Juyi revealed his childlike innocence.

Bai Juyi was surprised to see peach blossoms up in a mountain temple in the middle of summer, a discovery that countervailed his notion that peach trees only blossom in spring. Similarly, the world's people often have a biased opinion or notion about many things they see daily. They often jump to conclusions and form biased opinions according to their limited life experiences, rumors or even lies they are led to believe by corrupt politicians. Actually, there are many good people and good things, like the beautiful peach blossoms on the high mountain temple in the middle of the summer. The presence of those good things gives people the opportunity to correct their biased opinions and prejudices and show people the beauty of spring even after spring has departed.

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CATEGORY: Traditional Culture