

## Early morning mind

I wake at 2 a.m., lying on a couch in my sister's apartment in Boulder, my six year old daughter asleep on a mat beside me. Plagued by jet lag and early waking, but two a.m.? — I try all my usual tricks, listening to rain on my ipod, reciting rhyming poetry in my mind's ear, feeling for my pulse in each finger, but my mind will not let go. Finally I risk waking Rose by turning on a soft light to find the volume of Chinese poetry I bought at a used book store yesterday. In "A Restless Night in Camp," Tu Fu advises: "It is useless to worry, / Wakeful while the long night goes." The blunt words from this distant world at last begin to quiet my mind.

my thoughts  
as if in translation  
simplify, sleep

Note: Tu Fu. "XXIII, A Restless Night in Camp," trans. Rexroth, in *One Hundred Poems from the Chinese*. New York: New Directions Pub., 1971