

HOMMAGE to Áo Dài

Phạm Gia Thụ

(Bài thơ này xin tặng tất cả những người đẹp mặc áo dài
mà tôi đã được may mắn biết, hoặc sẽ được biết)

Darling, can I ask you to put on to-night
Your silver phoenix decorated *áo dài*,
Which, with your other jewel beauties
For this special occasion, fit perfectly.

We will go to the best restaurant first,
And order all the dishes you like,
Along with a real good bottle of wine.
Then, to quench our long music thirst,
In the soft light of a club we will dance,
At the wonderful music of a Cuban band.

We will start with a luscious tango, or a lazy rumba,
And will finish the night with a frantic samba.
With every valse turn, your dress will wrap around me,
And will also, with every cha cha step, sway so nicely.

Everywhere, in your stunning attire,
You will be seen, followed and admired.
Later on, can I remove your *áo dài*, on the beach ?
And we will swim, in the moonlight, as far as we can reach.



I am in love with the wonderful *áo dài*,
Of all shapes, all styles, worn days or nights.
Be they short, long, or middle of the way,
Red, blue, multishaded or just plain grey.

High collared, or exposing your whole neck
They can also be much more *osé*,
And reveal your cleavage in a full *décolleté*,
Together with your very lovely back.

My love, they cling to your shapely body,
And flatter your figure, pleasing any crowd.
They lighten your chest, flatten your tummy,
And float around you, like a soft cloud.

Your pants, with the same matching color,
Hug your nice hips and make you taller.
When you move gracefully in this so nice dress,
By their look, all men seem to give you a caress.

Darling ! When you serve me some food in your *ao dài*,
I feel like all spices from my country faraway
Are holding a meeting in my plate to-day.
Perfumes and savors of all natures, all kinds
Flatter my taste, and make me so nicely high.

When you lean against me in your dress, so shapely,
And look absently afar, with melancholy,
All natural beauties of my land appear before me :
Ha Long Bay, Hue Castles and Nha Trang Beaches,
Mingle with Hanoi monuments and Saigon busy streets.
Then I just want to hold you in my arms, tightly,
And carry you up in your *ao dài*, to kiss you tenderly.

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