

# A NIGHT OF POETRY AND PLAY



Special Digital  
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*" These violent delights have violent ends  
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder  
Which, as thy kiss, consume "*

# A SHANGHAI POETRY ZINE





*a shanghai poetry zine*

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**THEATRE  
ANON.**

*in cooperation with  
East West Theatre & Theatre Anon*

## A Shanghai Poetry Zine

### A NIGHT OF POETRY AND PLAY

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## **Life Stages**

*Sandra C. Obiora*

Today, I wished dearly for time to pause.  
I yearned earnestly for just this cause.  
That I may simply hold onto this quickly Passing moment.  
If only to make it slower,  
To grab a hold of it and shout, Pause!

For I have found that while we are alone  
We yearn for a brother,  
And while we are with mother  
We yearn for father.  
Then when we find that lover,  
We yearn for yet another.

Now I realize that I cannot rewind to the past. Now I believe that time flies by fast.  
Yesterday is gone, today is far spent,  
And tomorrow is here.  
Yet in the comforting hands of my dear,  
I have nothing to fear.

For life occurs at different ages and stages.  
And in no time,  
We wind up with so many pages.  
Each line you find within  
Was a day that soon ends.  
Each page added within  
Creates chapters to a book that never bends.

## **Demonic Delusion**

*Michael Watson*

You see everything through walls.  
It's there, in the distance,  
Frantically passing you by.

You do not hear the music,  
Just a distorted hum from the future.  
Sounds devoid of emotion.

You touch but do not feel.  
Grasping desperately, the hands cannot  
Caress the gentle flow.

Life's juices are lost on the tongue.  
All flavor is dull.  
Meaningless drops falling on a confused pallet.  
Was it not once sweet?

Fear is all you smell.  
Such an alluring scent.  
The aroma of imprisonment keeps you Intoxicated in this senseless realm.

A life lived inside Demonic Delusions  
Has drained the senses.  
Tired and breathless,  
The vessel is a harrowing vision of what was.

## Yesterday

*Elena Sichrovsky*

Yesterday you were beautiful  
Amber light shining on you  
Like the sun waking up  
A sleeping garden of roses  
You wore a crown of petals  
Dandelions picked before they  
Turned to clusters of wishes  
That you whispered to the wind

Yesterday you were beautiful  
Fragrant with the scent of dawn  
Like a pillow of perfume broke  
And seeped into your skin  
You loved that shade of lavender  
A sunrise over a sky of violet  
The softness of the lace and linen  
That danced around your perfection

Yesterday you were beautiful  
The stained strawberry of your lips  
Like a vial of nectar pouring into mine  
Sweeter than a crushed pomegranate  
Your fingers in my palm like a bow  
Ribbons and satin framing you  
A princess on her throne of my heart  
That I crowned with a kiss on your forehead

Yesterday you were beautiful  
And I loved  
The satisfaction of your design  
So I pressed  
A bundle of bills into the hand  
Of the undertaker  
Making him promise to keep you  
Beautiful always

## **The Wife's Prayer**

*Amahl Zamir*

My mother used to pray to God  
“O God Almighty, one day you will take us

When You do, can you please take my husband first?  
If I die before he dies, who will take care of him?”

That was her prayer.

My grandmother used to pray to God, too,  
For her husband, my mother's father, my grandfather to die before her.

My mother and her sisters asked her why.  
“Why would you ask God for such a thing?”

My grandmother smiled.  
“Because if I die, who will take care of him?”

My mother and her sisters vowed to take care of my grandfather  
Should he die before my grandmother.

My grandmother shook her head.  
“No, my dears, you have your own husbands to take care of.”

So God took my grandfather first.  
And my grandmother lived by herself for years, smiling.

My mother prayed to God for the same thing,  
For her husband, my father, my nephew's grandfather, to die before her.

Me and my brothers asked her why.

“Why would you ask God for such a thing?”

My mother smiled, and told us about our grandmother.

“If I die, who will take care of him?”

Me and my brothers vowed to take care of father

Should he die before our mother.

My mother shook her head

“No, my dears, you have your own wives to take care of.”

God took my father first.

Now my mom will live by herself for years.

So far she has not smiled.

So I refused to marry.

## **Frozen**

*Serena Marlin*

The heart grows like a tree,  
The leaves made of hopes and dreams.  
But if those have died,  
Falling away one by one.  
The branches bare and naked,  
Roots dying a slow death.  
The soul freezes,  
Winter has come.

## Views

*Patrick Schiefen*

It is from eyes behind eyes  
that I view the reality of this world,

for I have refused to transform in some ways,  
but have caved in many others,

frosting the windows I once  
looked through as a boy.

(But what has always remained with me  
are the questions  
I can never put into words.)

If I am to be dismissed as a child,  
bold but naïve,  
and stripped before you,

then I will not be afraid to be seen  
and I will not cower from the sound of my own voice.

I will never change because I'm told to change,  
never fight because I'm told to fight,  
never love because I'm told to love,

and just because you have the privilege  
to stand on a stage above me  
and tell me what I should be seeing,

does not mean I ever will.

## Not Your Sonnet

*Awesta Zarif*

Compare me to a summer's day? Good luck. I am far more than those sunny skies and white clouds.

I'm not as novel as three months out of the year, my reign lasts through the storms, the bone-chilling cold, the gray haze that leads to gray thoughts.

Don't misunderstand, I love to be bright and light. But sometimes my leaves do fall and passers-by step on them to hear the crunch and nothing else.

Crumbled little leaves and feelings.

At times I am reborn like the spring with new songs, ideas, inspirations, a whole damn new attitude and so what? Equinox, solstice, harvest, bloom, I am all of it. I grow from a baby bud, I live in the feeling, I get tired, I give up.

Just like that, the cycle continues.

Compare me to a summer's, autumn's, spring's, winter's day. I am all and all are me, cycle, cycle, cycle.

## **Rubbernecking the past**

*Rachael Basson*

What is it about  
change  
that makes us  
rubberneck the past?

Some people remain  
in our lives  
far longer  
than they should.

Others  
flutter in and out  
when we need  
them most.

But we have  
to trust  
Destiny,  
for she's a wizened hag.

The ones who are  
the corner  
pieces  
of our jigsaw-puzzle soul

will always find a way  
to return;  
slotting into a newly-  
opened crevice  
to make the puzzle whole again.

Maybe I'm not  
rubbernecking;  
maybe I'm just  
PMSing.

## **Enchanted**

*Serena Marlin*

Stopped believing in fairy tales  
a long, long time ago.

Those silly, childish dreams  
only for the foolish and slow.

Thought it was wise to keep my eyes  
locked on the ground below,

With eyes open but my heart closed  
was best to prevent woe.

But fracturing a fairly tale gives  
new life, now I know,

Because you have brought some magic  
and made my heart beat so.

## **Forget Me Not**

*Jai Stephens*

I never want to leave...  
So I tend to stay, in no dismay,  
way past scheduled time...  
I never want to leave

Because when you're close to me  
I can feel your heartbeat in sync with mine,  
I never want to leave,  
For you ask me not to go away.  
I never want to leave.

Because the angelic air you breathe  
While under me is so peacefully sweet  
It calls my soul to sing,  
I never want you to leave.

Because your kiss permits me to be free insisting that I never stray,  
I never want to leave.  
So I tend to tempt and tease you  
until my love centers your chi (qi)  
Because of anticipating uncertainty,  
Of our next encounter of pure intimacy,  
I never want to leave

Because a part of me wonders  
If you'll remember me the next day.  
I never want to leave  
So when I stay I make sure to show grace.  
So every second of every minute  
I make an effort to embrace,

And caress the memory of your face.  
As indulgent as it seems,  
I never want to leave.

Because, undeniably, only the universe knows  
What tomorrow brings,  
And the mere idea of letting you go  
Threatens my very being.

## **The meaning of transform**

*Josh Pemberton*

To transform is not to change  
Out of your current skin.  
It is to accept new possibilities  
And wonder how to begin.

It is not bound by limits  
Or a philosophy of the new.  
It's the precious moments you spend  
And the little changes in you.

You can be in the same clothes  
Walk the same way to work  
Take the same travelled road  
It is not the outside that helps you transform

It's on the inside looking out.  
Gaining perspective on what it means  
Whatever it actually is

It's the sense of accomplishment  
In defeating all challenges  
Conquering new fears  
It's that moment that last a minute or a lifetime

A moment where you think to yourself  
This is it  
World come at me

To transform is to stay the same on the outside  
But to be a force of nature deep within.

## **Privileged to Be**

*Fadzy*

Gentleness is a strength not something to be ashamed of  
To wish to throw away  
Some search for it and never find it.  
All their lives they've known only bitterness, harshness,  
Coldness.

They don't know how to be anything else.  
They bend backwards and forwards to find justice, even if it means inflicting pain.  
Their hearts have never known peace,  
Never has the bird's song been in tune with  
The rhythm of their hearts.

Disarray is the order of the day.  
Every day it's served on the menu,  
Same old, same old.  
Only difference is,  
For variety, sometimes its served stewed.  
At times fried, steamed even.  
Still same old.

The constellations aligned against their favour.  
The universe in them knows sorrow intimately, for they seem to have it all but inside  
they are empty.  
They don't even know...  
The way they act...it's not a choice.  
They don't even know.  
Deep down they are grieving the loss of something they've never had.  
So they seek to bring down everyone who has it.

And oh how we fall for it sometimes!  
We arise to match their intensity.  
Fire for fire.  
Which is really equals disaster.  
We are a sharp contrast and it should be so.  
The Ying to the Yang.  
Our fighting methods different.  
They use sword,  
We the descendants of Sister Nurture, we fight with our eyes.  
To be able to feel so empathetically,  
So deeply.  
When life has been anything but.

To seek to understand  
When you have unanswered questions, too.  
To have the ability to love deeply  
With a heart full of scars,  
With shredded pieces scattered all over,  
Is truly a gift of its own.

When your intuition is telling you fight, claw, stomp and scream, and instead  
You hurt, bleed, heal, smile, love and hurt all over again.  
That's deep.  
That's strength.  
That's Gentleness.  
Something not to be ashamed of or to wish to throw away  
'Cause some search for it and never find it.



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