
s e v e n
p o e m s

by Joshua Ip





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Cha: An Asian Literary Journal

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<http://asiancha.com>

<http://chajournal.blog>

ellipsis

no new text in the group chat
but someone's status: "typing..."
thoughts slide between the lines
and moss your face with evening.

鹿柴【唐朝：王维】

空山不见人，
但闻人语响。
返影入深林，
复照青苔上。

kira-kira filter

vintage is out, cute stickers in.
—have you seen the filter with the little birds?
i tried the rippling water one, it blows,
there's an effect for anyone who needs one.

sometimes a story, sometimes a wall.
i swipe outside of them, she laughs within.
the story ends, her laughter soon expires,
the follower vexed by the followed one.

蝶恋花·春景【宋朝：苏轼】

花褪残红青杏小。燕子飞时，绿水人家绕。枝上柳绵吹又少。天涯何处无芳草。

墙里秋千墙外道。墙外行人，墙里佳人笑。笑渐不闻声渐悄。多情却被无情恼。

a bandwidth song

"when will you open the zoom room?"
glass in hand, i ask the internets.
and in that palatial server farm
who knows what year it is today?
perhaps i'd ride the fibers to their source,
but I fear those whirring racks and routers
high-end and water-cooled
with their dancing mirages of data—
how far from irl?

swiping through,
scrolling past,
screen-lit, sleepless.

for all of net-neutrality's promises,
why does my connection only clear when i close the window?
men will mourn and revel, part and meet
a video blurs and clears and flows and blips
and always falters when we need it most.
yet i wish we could stay like this—
a thousand miles apart, staring at the same screen.

水调歌头·明月几时有【宋朝：苏轼】

明月几时有？把酒问青天。不知天上宫阙，今夕是何年？我欲乘风归去，又恐琼楼玉宇，高处不胜寒。起舞弄清影，何似在人间？

转朱阁，低绮户，照无眠。不应有恨，何事长向别时圆？人有悲欢离合，月有阴晴圆缺，此事古难全。但愿人长久，千里共婵娟。

redhead

a flaming, frizzy perm flaring my crown,
i grip the counter. hairdryers ahem to a halt.
i raise my head, make eye contact, let rip
heaven-ward howl, for hours, my heaving bosoms!

thirty months growing it out, all dust and dirt!
eighty inches! this lunatic thunderhead?
and should i hang around till hangry, anguish
for what, until everything goes white?

we haven't even settled what happened last time,
and you want me to snow-out, extinguish,
subordinate my hate? i'll grab your clippers
and run them through a hor-lan valley in my do!

i sup on horsetail extract and collagen,
i laugh while knocking back keratin and biotin,
i'll grow it back, reforest these balding
provinces, and fluff a coif fit for an emperor!

满江红·怒发冲冠【宋朝：岳飞】

怒发冲冠，凭栏处、潇潇雨歇。抬望眼，仰天长啸，壮怀激烈。三十功名尘与土，八千里路云和月。莫等闲、白了少年头，空悲切！

靖康耻，犹未雪。臣子恨，何时灭。驾长车，踏破贺兰山缺。壮志饥餐胡虏肉，笑谈渴饮匈奴血。待从头、收拾旧山河，朝天阙！

one more round

Tiger Beer comes from the sky, chug it down until you high!
Mirror mirror on the wall, Jesus make it white as snow!
Party rock in house tonight, wave my gold card at the sky!
I so smart I GEP, money will come back to me!
Wagyu beef and truffle fry! Champagne must be magnum size!
Lao Fu Zi and Tan Ah Seng, one more round ah mai cao geng!
Come I jio you KTV, better listen properly!
Bee bor bee bor useless here, pls don wake up my idea!
All the guai kias masturbate, only drunkards can get laid!
Jackie Chan and Wong Fei Hong, drink until they siao ding dong!
Why you say me no money, you want cash can take from me!
Moto bike, LV purse, ask the waiter change for beers, drown
your fewlings with a cheers!

将进酒【唐朝：李白】

君不见黄河之水天上来，奔流到海不复回。
君不见高堂明镜悲白发，朝如青丝暮成雪。
人生得意须尽欢，莫使金樽空对月。
天生我材必有用，千金散尽还复来。
烹羊宰牛且为乐，会须一饮三百杯。
岑夫子，丹丘生，将进酒，杯莫停。
与君歌一曲，请君为我倾耳听。
钟鼓馔玉不足贵，但愿长醉不复醒。
古来圣贤皆寂寞，惟有饮者留其名。
陈王昔时宴平乐，斗酒十千恣欢谑。
主人何为言少钱，径须沽取对君酌。
五花马、千金裘，呼儿将出换美酒，与尔同销万古愁

neither civil nor servant

the servant, hair high-sloped,
silver screen lit with his cursor
dropping a stat every ten words
fairs the paper once he's cleared
wanders through meeting rooms
treats a fellow staff to lunch
three beers in, he gives his word
his ears turn red, his vision blurs
confounding budget pinchers
his exploits at that meeting
even if he retires early
no lah, who is this fiction?

cleaves a clear arc with his pen
falling meteor-like to land
and no orphaned lines in a thousand
buries his name at paper's end
fingers dance, laptop aligned
toasts to a newfound friend
like a mountain, heavy-laden
yet his spirit's rainbow-spun
wielding points to save the programme
still gossiped of in canteen
he leaves an unbowed, living legend...
my hair whitens over my masterplan

侠客行【唐朝：李白】

赵客缟胡纓，吴钩霜雪明。
银鞍照白马，飒沓如流星。
十步杀一人，千里不留行。
事了拂衣去，深藏身与名。
闲过信陵饮，脱剑膝前横。
将炙啖朱亥，持觞劝侯嬴。
三杯吐然诺，五岳倒为轻。
眼花耳热后，意气素霓生。
救赵挥金槌，邯郸先震惊。
千秋二壮士，烜赫大梁城。
纵死侠骨香，不惭世上英。
谁能书阁下，白首太玄经。

susurrus

searching, seeking; surging, shivering; seizing, sundering, ceasing.
warmth warps to winter—when to catch a breath?
sipping weak wine won't ward the hurrying winds.
wild geese traverse my grief. we were close, once.

chrysanthemum cumulates. consumptive. who'll call, collect?
sole-shift window sentry, will I weather till twilight?
the parasol tree permits—it's pissing till the evening; drizzling, dripping.
this fucking day—how will I ever make it to rhyme with “sorrow”?

声声慢·寻寻觅觅【宋朝：李清照】

寻寻觅觅，冷冷清清，凄凄惨惨戚戚。乍暖还寒时候，最难
将息。三杯两盏淡酒，怎敌他、晚来风急？雁过也，正伤心，
却是旧时相识。

满地黄花堆积，憔悴损，如今有谁堪摘？守著窗儿，独自怎
生得黑？梧桐更兼细雨，到黄昏、点点滴滴。这次第，怎一
个、愁字了得。