

Poems by **Anthony Tao**, music by **Liane Halton**

Translation to Chinese by **Liao Qingrui 廖庆睿** (*The Other Side, Crazy, Summer 2020*) and **David Janke** (*The Widow, Writing Myth*)

Note: Some of the Chinese text has yet to be finalized

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The Other Side

另一面

跑馬溜溜的山上、一朵溜溜的雲啲
端端溜溜的照在、康定溜溜的城啲
月亮彎彎、康定溜溜的城啲

—Opening stanza of “Kangding Love Song”

Paoma to the east, grasslands to the west.
Wherefrom the mist, spilling over the peaks?
跑马往东，草甸向西。
山巅的雾，自何而流溢？

What's on the other side, beyond what the eyes can see?
That for you is the human beast,
那另一面有什么，超过目力所能及？
那就是两脚兽，

Lurching between living and abyss:
Beyond the yaks and frost trees,
徘徊于活着与深渊之间：
漫过那些牦牛与挂着霜华的树林

Beyond buntings, and prayers
Thrashing in breeze. Desire is limitless.
漫过那些经幡，还有祷词
在风中飘摇。欲望，无边无际。

The universe is so large:
Are we not satisfied looking up at the stars?
宇宙如此广袤浩瀚：
我们便无法满足于对群星的仰望？

Oceans shiver in the dark:
Why not bask in the murmuring creek?
大海在幽暗中震颤:
那何不就在潺潺的溪流中徜徉?

Our Earth is singular:
Are we not satisfied with its beauty?
我们的星球独特超凡:
可我们就是无法满足于在她的美中安然静享?

And how many of us, like the lovestruck couple in that song
From Kangding, are looking beyond as we speak? Beyond the limits
我们中还有多少人, 如同康定情歌中
那双热爱的情侣, 此时正望向远方? 望向那

Of what we want.

Just to say we went there, the other side.

欲求极限所在 又之外

只为了想说, 我们去过, 那另一面。

Moonlight's come down
月光照临

溜溜的城哟

Moonlight's come down to Kangding
月光照临 在小城康定

Join us
in the moonlight over Kangding.
跟我们一起来
在这康定城上的清辉中。

Moonlight...
那清辉...

Join us on the other side.
跟我们一起来 在那另一面

But I'll be gone when you arrive.
但当你抵达 我已走远。

Crazy

疯狂

You know those commercials, that fragrance one
in particular,

Natalie Portman saying into the camera:

And you

— what would you do for love?

你知道那些广告，香水的那支

特别是那一款

娜塔莉·波特曼对着镜头说：

那你呢

——你会为爱做些什么？

What we did was

everything

我们为爱所做的

是所有一切

— we quarreled, we teased, we pestled
our shoddy, tottery hearts to pulp
in the mortar of what could not change;

——我们争吵，我们调情，我们把
自己粗劣、动摇的两颗心 捣成了血浆
在名为“秉性难移”的铁臼中；

we recriminated, impeached, vied en pointe,
clawed at our eyes to make them see
the lies of truth, the limits of beauty;

我们唇枪舌剑，疑神疑鬼，锱铢必较，
抓挠彼此双眼 好让它们看见
真相会说谎 美好有局限

we coveted and condemned,

we ached, lustful and tongue-tied,

we cried over Skype, uprooted logic and sense

我们觊觎，我们谴责，

我们感到痛苦，欲望满涨而难发一言，

我们在视频通话中哭泣，逻辑与常识不值一提

desperate to believe
love meant struggle could overcome
illness, obliterate enemies
at the cost of ourselves;
近乎绝望地坚信
爱是一场苦战 可以降服攻克
病疾，荡平寇敌
只要牺牲我们自己

we spilled into the rain
where we mined for blood that might prove
we could be
我们冲进雨中
在那里掘地三尺 鲜血淋漓 想要证明
我们可以

as ravenous, charged with want
as those pulchritudinous in scent ads;
一样饥渴难耐，物欲充盈
与香水广告里那些尤物别无二致

we screamed, we pounded
on surfaces that do not give,
我们叫嚷，我们挥拳
对着永不退缩的硬质表面，

committed violence
with neglect, balled fists
upon our own heads, hair tangled with tears,
互不理睬
又重拳出击
对着我们自己的头颅，发丝与泪水交缠，

and within the same hour rode in a car, silent,
looking out opposite windows.

然后在同一个小时内坐进一辆车里，沉默，
望向各自的车窗外。

I'm sorry, we said,
很抱歉，我们说道，

and considered what was so bad, after all,
what was so unhealthy, what does it mean to be crazy
然后思考 糟透了的是是什么， 究竟，
是什么那样不健康， 那到底意味着什么 说起 疯狂

but committing the same mistakes
and the same pleasures,
但一边还是犯着相同的错误
纵享一样的欢愉，

needing feeling sufficient
and alive, my god, each second a lifetime.
需要 感到满足
以及活着，神啊，一秒即是一生。

We wanted to say,
I'm living a series of delusions
in which I deserve you,
我们本来想说，
我活得有如一连串错觉
以为自己值得拥有你，

but fearing sentiment, lacking
courage, what we said instead:
但怕太感伤，又缺乏
勇气，我们转而说：

Stop being this part of yourself
Let's take some time
Let's take some time
你别再这样放任你的这一面
不如我们冷静一段儿
不如我们冷静一段儿

And time took us

*to our alleys and bays
far and away*

What we did was

*more than we could
and more than we'll say*

Time took us

*to the ends of the world
far and away*

*where one's night
was the other's day*

What we really meant was:

我们的言下之意其实是：

What *then*?

然后 又怎样？

What *next*?

下一步又如何？

When?

什么时候呢？

Summer 2020

2020 年夏

They know summer has arrived, in May,
when the heat stays
他们知道夏天来了，在五月里，
当热气勾留

like a grandson returned from abroad.
In the afternoon they slip outside to the curb,
跟一个从海外归国的孙儿一样。
下午 他们溜跬到马路牙子边儿上，

wheelchair next to folding stool,
fine-tuned to the distance of weather
轮椅与折凳 并排坐着，
对天气的变化与多愁善感

and sentiment, eager
to leave the humidity to the hot
早已调适停当，恨不能
将这潮湿留给炽热

memories of youth. It's been a fine life.
They have survived
青春的记忆。此生已算不错。
他们捱过了

each other, knowing how quickly
the world can turn.
彼此，知道世界的倾覆
可以多么迅疾。

Interesting, the disposition days can take,
placid one second,
有趣啊，这日子的脾性变化无常，
上一秒风平浪静，

then fury and riot
flooding us where we sit.
下一秒暴风骤雨
将我们就地淹没于此。

Clouds are wrung dry, the old couple
soaked to their bones.
雨云被拧得一滴不剩，老两口儿
从里到外浇了个透。

As others scamper for cover, they wait
to be aired out in the late sun.
其他人奔走避雨，而他们等着
在傍晚的阳光中被风吹干

And masks, what's the point?
Dangers always lurk, but
还有那些口罩，有什么用？
危险永远四处潜藏，但

pleasures, too, like breathing
in the purified air. They are comforted
欢欣也一样，比如呼吸
这雨洗净的空气。他们得到快慰

by the assurance of change:
storm to cloudless, cold to warm.
得自世事必然轮转的天道：
雨后必晴，冬后必春。

The Widow

寡妇之挽歌

Today I woke further away
Who knows why some memories fade
今天醒来，又淡了些，
不知为何，回忆萎谢。

Some other today, I'll forget this place
Wonder, how are you, and where
另一个今天，此处不再忆，
你过得怎样，在哪里

In summer heat, or spring rain
On that swingset, our first date
无论酷暑或春雨，
秋千上首次约会，

In the backyard where we chased
Under the pergola where you said yes
后院里追逐嬉戏，
藤架下定了爱情。

I want the cigarette off your lips
The midnight giggle, the morning kiss
要来你唇上叼着的烟
夜晚缠绵，清晨便拥吻

I want to wake with your breath on mine
Or short of that, to know we're fine
在你的气息中醒来，
或者至少，知道我们没事。

My dear, my dear

You have to wait

吾爱，吾爱，

要再等待

Try recounting

Our bygone days

试试回想，

往日的我们。

My dear, my dear

吾爱，吾爱，

Try recounting

试试想起，

You have to wait

要再等待，

Yesterday

昨天的日子。

And when the kids visit, I sit and stare
At the geography between here and there
孩子来探望，我坐着发呆，
痴望着你留下的那片空。

What do you mean I have to wait?
I have been counting: today today today
我凭什么还要等待？
我从未忘记：今天，今天，今天。

Writing Myth

我们的神话

In the mythology of us
we can rewrite our love.

在我们的神话里，
爱情任由我们编写。

On first sight, let's say,
hearts racing, time stopped.

初次见面时，
心跳加速，时间停止。

Our first kiss
a leap of trust,

初吻时
紧张万分

butterflies in our guts.

Our quarrels resolved

为信任退让，
送花送红酒

with flowers and wine,
bloodless and sane.

和平又理性
解决彼此间的矛盾。

Our nights lambent,

bodies twisted,

深夜的情欲燃烧，

肉体的纠缠，

scars we can touch,
watchful stars above.

摸得着的疤痕，
群星在夜空中瞭望。

In the mythology of us
angels abide,
在我们的神话里,
天使守护我们,

their envy as praise.
Look at us
他们用火眼金睛,
凝视我们,

through their eyes,
unhewn and ablaze.
他们的嫉妒,
是我们的颂歌。

Love is a crossing:
Let us take it
爱情是渡口
我们从此启航,

through rain and memory
to the boundary between night
穿过雨滴与回忆,
驶向黑夜与白昼之间

and day. Let us compose
our love, our commitment
的边界。我们来谱写我们
的爱情, 彼此间的承诺,

defiant like a moral, stone coiled
like scandent stems, like light
如同道德无可动摇, 如同向天
攀缘的石柱, 如同在珍珠中

bottled in pearls.
We are the exception.
锁住的光。
我们就是那个例外。

And when thunder strikes
or water swells the sky,
无论电闪雷鸣,
还是雨横风狂,

whether metaphor
for cataclysm or rapture,
不管是狂欢还是
灾难的预兆,

we decide it together.
In the mythology of us
我们一起决定。
在我们的神话里,

we are our own heroes
pumping fists, swilling
我们自己当英雄,
暴饮美酒,

merry wine, our smile wide
as Bacchus's butt.
我们的笑容,
跟酒神的屁股一样宽。

But what if,
just if,
但假如,
只是假如,

we were as Euripides
sitting in the shade of a laurel tree
我们像欧里庇德斯那样,
坐在月桂树下,

and decided, after all,
this would be a tragedy?
最后决定我们的神话,
就写成一场悲剧呢?

A three-act play
where, after the kiss,

一场三幕剧，
初吻后，直滚床单，

a chest pillows a head,
an apology?
完事后头靠胸膛，
一声道歉就散场？