



Nicholas YB Wong

Written by Youth and Other Poems

↳ Written by Youth ↵

He sits on the cold arms of his chair, withdrawing
himself from the essays. Dollops of scribbles
illicitly display themselves on paper,
with spiteful cross-outs here and there.

Sudden roars of cheers drive him
to the playground, where he sees his students,
now zinged and topless, like Roman warriors,
jumping onto each other to celebrate their goal.

Under the glory sun, their sweat glitters
with a youthful tan.

When one's young, one is less conscious of who touches

their body and how it is touched.

Their luscious butts, knurled chests and hairless legs –
as natural as nature can be.

One of them sees him and waves at him.

“See? I’m good!” his student yells, thinking his skills and sportsmanship
are why his teacher is there. But he stays for their youth
and for how fearless they are of the world.

As usual, he says nothing, but nods.

Sometimes, he pities the priests, who are so
old and close to death. So they touch the boys,
not for their bodies, but their youth that can challenge the world.

He heads back to his desk, where he finds the tumescent
warrior’s essay. He slides his finger along the lines,
like a blind man trying to understand something
from torpid Braille.

↳ Ordinary ↵

I am not straight, my parents are –
but they are not pandas, so they are not rare,
not rich.

I am gifted, but I am not straight,
I do not bother to know
the functions of children.

Not a panda, I am not
a gift given to Hong Kong, Macao,
or wherever befriending China –
so I am not political.

I am perhaps a cricket
cheeping and chirping to gesture my existence,
a bee fizzing and buzzing to prove its busy work.

Or worse, I am soundless –

silent bamboo shoots set to sprout only in springs.

But like pandas, I roll, not over hills.

Sometimes over my friends, mostly strangers,

with a mix compassion and compulsion.

When I roll, my brain is not my favorite organ.

I am a capitalist, not an animal,

so I worry about my later days.

Days that I cannot change my soiled pants,

that someone reminds me of my age,

my name and whom I may have loved

by mistake. In an elderly home, I will be alone,

perhaps smoking hard and watching anonymous ants

carrying crumbs to wall corners,

where they enter and come out, unrecognized.

↳ **Appetites*** ↵

1.

Scientists say one's want reflects one's lack.

Let's say in the street, you see the smooth

thighs of women. Then, an urge from the parietal lobe

in your watery cerebrum kicks in, so you want to suck

a cherry dipped in dark hot chocolate.

This association is nothing erotic. It is biological –
your body simply lacks sugar and fiber.

2.

Here I am, in a two-star Michelin
restaurant, reviewing your signature green
lies, soaked in a thin layer of lemon
liqueur and ginger oil. They look fresh
and organic. I put a slice, soft and creamy,
on my tongue, the one that you tasted
and tasted you. The lies melt at once, followed
by an after-kick of tepid alcohol. Then,
you appear from the kitchen in white,
looking professional even without the tall
ruffled chef hat, and ask me how many stars
your gratifying lies are worth.

3.

I wake up this morning, with a compulsion to taste my blood.
I distrust Descartes; I believe in the body,
so I listen to it.
I slide a razor along my chin,
the sound of which so calming, almost quiet,
like a cat licking its paws.

A thin red line appears, blood slowly soaking
the white foam. I look into the mirror, bored
with my surface. Then, I wipe a drop of red
with my finger and have a good taste of my
inner self.

4.

Last day of every month,
in this elderly home,

the same birthday song dies out,
followed by disjointed rounds of clapping.

Wishes then fill up the room,
wishes whispered by those

who cannot name names
and recall when they were born.

Their bed, their breaths and their hair
smell fetidly the same.

Nurses urge them to make wishes
before it is too late. They do.

Wallpapers are busy listening,
contemplating what they want.

Let me live one more day

I want to see my children

I will give them up if only

I could live one more day

Then, they gather the greatest
strength from their weakest lungs and

blow the candles.

As they wish,

the flames are gone,
leaving the lonely sugar-coated

cake on the table,
surrounded by soulless gazes

that truly appreciate perhaps
their last sweetness in life.

Author Bio

Nicholas YB Wong is a poet based in Hong Kong. He is the winner of the Sentinel Literary Quarterly Poetry Competition and a nominee for Best of the Net 2010 and Best of the Web 2011 Anthology. He is now a poetry editor of *This*, an online literary zine. His poetry will be forthcoming in Saltwater Press and Assaracus. He is currently an MFA Candidate at the City University of Hong Kong. Visit him at <http://nicholasybwong.weebly.com>

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