

ARCHAEOLOGY (TRILOGY)

KENNEDY (XIQING) ZHANG

B.A. in International Studies and Economics

Emory University, Class of 2022

Efflorescence

Juvenescence of January

Was the silver coin you wrapped in dumpling beef
You polished my baby teeth into milestone trophies
I enshrined your dime like a jackpot in the lottery

Fireworks' cacophony of February

Frightened my childhood monsters into retreat
We celebrate with sweet dumplings of black sesame
I escaped from your red packet to play hide and seek

Marigold and Magnolia of March

Flourished like the spring pancakes made of starch
You handpicked sprouts and carrots at a Beijing Bazaar
Before picking up spinach and egg from outskirt farms

Ivies of the Idyllic April

Climbed in your garden alongside tomato and basil
The pasta you cooked resembled the bow ties for tuxedos
I had a stomach of butterflies they call it Farfalle noodles

Cherry blossoms of Matilda's May

Flourished like the carnations I bought you on Mother's Day
We relished Peking duck, scallion, sweet bean paste
You adumbrate one day I'll move to the Empire State

On summer solstice under the reign of June

Hurricanes flooded the city into blue lagoons
Breakfast of Champions, Clubs of Wonton Soup
Father is a haven, the mammoth is a monsoon

Scandinavian daylight of mid-July

Lingered as we enjoyed Magnums at midnight
You preferred rice pudding over the Swedish pie

The Columbia Journal of Asia

In your Canon Camera '07 immortalized

Every afterglow of August
Counted down the sunrise I depart for Atlanta
We dined in a Dim sum restaurant of Mida's touch
Melted custard shined like the California gold rush

On a lunar eclipse in September
You exhibit mooncakes on mahogany furniture
Autumn harvest was nana's cornucopia dinner
I was the catcher in the rye and you were the kite runner

October was embellished by Saskatoon maple leaves
Clementine and tangerine but you were evergreen
Under the autumn sun kids jumped on the trampoline
We baked madeleines and dressed up every Halloween

Under the sapphire stardust of November
You welcomed me to earth on effervescent 21st
Noodles of longevity and cranberry desserts
You gave me unconditional love I never deserved

December decorated the dazzling trees
We gathered around the hot pot's evaporating heat
To reminisce a year of victories and defeats
Let's raise a glass to this bittersweet odyssey

Effervescence

Jamborees of the January world
Echoed the antediluvian anthem of the Oriental Pearl
Jettison your jewelry, ego, and ghosts
Before time slipped away like liquid rose gold

Croon a dulcet serenade to your golden age girl
She mimicked Roman Holiday on her Truman Show
To capture gilded age, naïveté and tulip bubble
Before sophistication catches her after all her woes

Valentine of February Wonderland
Epitomized Orchard Road and Marina Bay Sands
Infinity champagne pool swamped by the upper hands
Carved the nostalgic skyline of a modern man

You condemn the romance that you deliberately damned
Test water and tolerance like a savvy businessman
Party like the candidates for the Buchanans' friends
Or the neon Amsterdam neither of us comprehend

You like to spend Epicurean March in midtown bars
That touted Cuban libre, Cuban sunsets and cigars
Discard your stereotypes, pride, prejudice, and wars
Condescendence lost its old-fashioned vanity of charm

Marquise diamonds have captured the eyes of a leopard
But pollute your principles, philosophies, soul & heart
Play the satire you once played on Blue Hawaiian guitar
Preaching Carpe Diem then play me black credit card

April in the air of Andersen's tales
Our rendezvous was an iridescent Ferris wheel
We took clandestine pilgrimages to Citadel
Buried compass and hatchets at the Grand Budapest Hotel

From the dusty bookshelf to the pristine carousel
Archeological fables had inevitable farewells
I collect frangipani and desiccated daffodils
And postcards from Amman you pretend to wish me well

I cherish the envelope of May's lagniappes

The Columbia Journal of Asia

And wallflowers that quietly intrude on my façade
I caught your Fata Morgana once at Wadi Rum
Ever since in ubiquitous metropolitan mirage

Before you trade my secrets in Square Mile arbitrage
You had my bona fide, goldmine the cheapest trust
You swore you loved London so I swore that's all I loved
When I ran towards you I ran myself out of luck

Joe gathered the scattered lullabies of June
Lavender dunes paint Pluto, Mars, and honeymoons
I miss my silk chiffon and Nanking Nightingale's tunes
My gallery exhibits all their resplendent ruins

Moonshine and limousines have consumed the tycoon
Sangiovese on cloud nine slowly fades into maroon
Is she smart enough to be a beautiful little fool?
I taught her since the day she came into her womb

Manhattanhenge has cast its refulgence on July
You whispered the wildest rhapsody and riptide
A midsummer night's dream at the Prohibition era's height
Tender is the night on this side of paradise

I rolled my dice at East of Eden now I paid my price
We fight futile fights in worlds beyond black and white
You should see how soirees fly and how camaraderies die
How young constellations lie and how old poets cry

August wailed in the backseats of Cosmopolitan taxis
Then bragged her Achilles's heel to Bowery's speakeasy
The grave Gatsby camouflaged in dazzling Daisy
Broadcast her weep to cities that never listen never sleep

Can a flapper's feather erase her grandiloquent grief?
Like fashionable bandanas, roaring 20s' handkerchiefs
Or the swindler she believed and the good man she deceived
Isn't mischief human's accidental relief?

September delivered Chardonnay to Prima Donnas
Souvenirs of bad behaviors were Dom Perignon's phantoms
I bet you've told people you love you hate them so so much
I bet you've told people you hate you love them keep in touch

You left honesty at the Rainbow Estate and Kennedy Town
You counted chrysanthemums and your last millennium sun
You were the wild child who could do the bare minimum
Then threw tantrums at your Mom like some triumphant fun

October has encountered Omotesando vintage shops
I brought my retro Kodak and broke my postmodern clock
Concoct contrarian promises, say I'll forget you not
Timeless was the time we were intoxicated by love

Coral cloudscape occupied the sky of Shibuya
Why is pax romana an evanescent panorama?
Once upon a time, we all resided in the Pangaea
Before words divided us, love was our lingua franca

November let's meet in lucid cybergalaxy dreams
Or my fluorescent fevers, Kodachrome pink boutiques
Or y2k arcade, Tokyo Tower, vending machines
Or ephemeral phenomenons for the enamored kerosene

Ginza glazed vinyl, disposable and cinematography
Promenades of Walkman, MP3, cassettes, and CDs
Magazines crowned technology a neoliberal masterpiece
Now reluctance is a decision every party has agreed

December ditched the fatigue of rapport and remorse
Sapporo was Shiroy Koibito from the Paramours
Blind lovers forgave scarlets in euphemistic metaphors
They denied what they discovered in that despicable drawer

Time will never heal unless you heal your own gore
I realized maiming you will always maim me worse
I used to beg time to give us forever and evermore
Now I thank god this is our repertoire and last word

Evanescence

Watershed wars deteriorate January drought
Draconian was her fragile justice and fraudulent faults
Half heroine the other half harrowing thoughts
When angels fight like devils, both of them have lost

Some lovers' legacy bequeathed the world the Taj Mahal
Some enemies' impulse built deathless empires' downfalls
Some friends bombarded tunnels to build hifalutin walls
Some pandemonium reverberates applause of insults

February lost equilibrium in her vendetta
The pirates wrought havoc took vengeance as panacea
If you adore melodrama you should tolerate its trauma
If you worship manmade madness you should embrace its macabre

In the aftermath of the apocalypse, they strode with panache
With shimmering deus ex machina to destruct and sabotage
She had an alchemist's passion, a vagabond's wanderlust
They had a gladiator's weapon and a lieutenant's mistrust

The maddest enigma and melancholia of March
Massacred lachrymose pining, blind hopes, burgundy scars
Reminiscence is a Forbidden City of salient stars
Oblivion is no penicillin or anesthetic healing art

She was falling for her lover as she was falling apart
Clandestine was their dark back in time at Hyde Park
All nemeses manufacture ersatz desiccated hearts
Do meteor rain libels still strike us as avant-garde?

April hummingbirds, persimmons, and apricots'
Serendipities crisscrossed legendary and star-crossed
Their existence is her pang, hers is their albatross
But hatred is the Frankenstein of bonhomie and love

Lugubrious Planetarium would soon catapult
The world's most despondent, crestfallen astronaut
Please send her a satellite call when you're ready to talk
Or pretend silence is an innocent, polite, painless pause

Amidst the mayhem of the magniloquent May

The Columbia Journal of Asia

She excavates the skeletons of ancient masquerades
Her protagonist character they tried to assassinate
Perished from the hemorrhage of her own halcyon days

David and Goliath were her quintessential Crusades
When angels fell from grace heaven would quickly cascade
They ambushed grenades under sanctimonious tirades
All pantomimes shared the same old treacherous traits

She still bleeds from the amorphous merlot wounds of June
She held her bleak breath in a smothering hospital room
Forgive her for losing faith, respect, and gratitude
Her growth is her resilience, not anyone's abuse

The insouciant canons they shot from crescent moon
Reshaped the silhouette of her saturnine Neptune
She pleaded to exit that planet's platitudes soon
But will miss the pulchritude of Betelgeuse at noon

The July that wields zenith is the July that wields nadir
Her misery gives away her mystery to Ha Long Bay sailors
Heyday of a square mile is yearning in a million-acre
She navigates no meridian to circumvent their equator

Compliments and criticisms are minuscule creators
Her Saturn moon engraves every footprint every crater
In an immaculate utopia, revenge has pain erasers
But mundanity is just a piece of unforgivable paper

August shivered like prophecy and catastrophe
Her shiniest poison were the tears of her own mercury
She sang liberty discreetly on narrow dead-end streets
Alongside belligerent bluebirds' blasphemous tweets

Victories are vain, but losses are so lonely
They vandalized dignity, tarnished image and belief
Her girlhood was torn asunder by infinitesimal epiphanies
They got ignorance from privilege, arrogance from prestige

September was betrayed by the beautiful bandits
Soulmates became the renegades who opened the floodgates
Flowers in the forlorn folklore unanimously languished
Her ebullience and efflorescence acquiescently anguished

She loves holding grudges, they love holding her hostage
She has no good girl to lose, they made her wicked to begin with
She endeavored for perfection to escape relentlessness
Turned out failures are her problems, and so are her successes

October was the loneliest army but the boldest soldier
To combat proud Leviathans so much older and colder
She couldn't shiver on gargantuan juggernauts' shoulders
Despite the atrocious shadows of dark ominous vultures

You neither savor nor ignore memory's taciturn torture
She prays to Dreamcatcher when slanders danced like sleepwalkers
The stabs that flabbergast you when you're an armorless youngster
Will linger in your lifetime so much longer and stronger

November prescribed no antidote for the antipodes
When you hate on any world, it first encroaches on your soul
Enemies once enamored were left fighting on the same boat
They repeated every debacle to survive as favorite foes

The disenchanting stargazer agony has swallowed
Burned the roses on the ropes that left the ruby on her throat
Broke Pangea, puzzle hearts, snow globe into archipelago
Restless magma, lava, youth, volcano all rested stone-cold

Dwindling twinkles of Hokkaido December
Remained elegant when heart-wrenched like conscientious dancers
Will you look back in regret, apology, sorrow or anger
For the hate you engendered and the love you endangered

Dead Dandelions of Siberian December
Abandoned childlike temper and abandoned childhood amber
To live is to learn to lose and to disremember
Her heartland is the permafrost everyone forever surrendered