A harvest in December

Poems

by Tony Chen Bingxiong

With gladness and gratefulness for

the people of Stranger Conversations

If

If the fretting teenager

Could receive a hug

Instead of constant danger

If the howling infant

Could receive love

Instead of a dirty manger

If Truth could speak

And find a listening ear

If I could call

And you'd be always near

Wouldn't you say

That this is a waking

Sweeter than dreaming

Hamburger

Prioritise

The labourer

Who pattied your hamburger

And forget

The rent-collector

Who headlined yesterday's Finance titles

In today's news

Your hamburger

Tastes extra salty

Because your labourer

Wept over compounding debts

Forgive him

He couldn't stop his tears

I am Singapore

I am the transgender prostitute

Tonight my claws are out

My rival in Geylang

Will never have that Australian sailor

I am the drug mule

Tonight my eyes are down

An officer at Customs

Will find out about this white powder

I am the barista

Tonight my phone is out

My colleagues have fallen sick

And tomorrow

Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow

I, alone, on my own

I will serve the moneyed customers

Of a certain

Prostitute

And a certain

Drug mule

I am Singapore

And I am an ocean of bitter tears

Excruciatingly extracted

from generation after generation

I am Singapore

Singapore!

Ode to gumption

It's too late, young one

Who to blame?

The pioneers who were betrayed by

one of their own?

("Et tu, Brutus?")

Irregardless, you can

cry

weep and howl

At least the system lets you

wail and flail

Tweet and Toot

Like, Share, and Comment

Eat your veggies

Go to school

Be the obedient slave

You were always meant to be

But

No

You tell me No

Well, that's good

For a start, at least

Alternating

Languidly the cat lies on the floor

Yet it speedily retreats from

A grown man's violent swats

Torrentially the flood sweeps away a car

Yet rain sweetly cascades down

The awaiting crops of the farmer

How hot the sun is

Yet in the night I long for it

俳句

我走过寒冬

多么灿烂的阳光

季节的流动

fin