

CHANGMING YUAN

FATHERLY FEAR

To Allen Qing Yuan

how much
just how much love should I show you, Son
I do not know, I only know
how I had tried
how I'd persisted in having you as my second child, a lifelong companion to your bro
how I had found the greatest joy in merely seeing you after each long and hard day
but I never meant for you to have been
36 days prematurely born, and to have begun
Suffering so much when you were only 12 years old, suffering
from a terrible drought within your Chinese skin, suffering
from bulged disks that cause you to walk like a cripple, suffering
from sciatic pain when you move around, suffering
from having to withdraw from your school's volleyball team, suffering
from lacking the confidence to emulate your elder brother, suffering
from your limitations to kick, jump, run, bend like your friends, suffering
from your inability to work outside home to earn your own money, oh Son
I do not know, I do not know how much love I should show to you:
if a bit too little, you would feel disappointed of my fatherly love
if a bit too much, I fear heavens would be so jealous as to take you away from me

indeed, how much
just how much love should I show you, Son
I do not know, I only know
after I die, my other self will stand right behind your back
wherever you are, whenever there is or there is no sunshine
ready to protect you against all evil gods and ghosts

but while still alive, I do not know, Son
how much love I should show you:
if a bit too little, you might feel disappointed of my fatherly love
if a bit too much, I fear heavens might be so jealous as to take you away from me



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