

## Growth

“When you’re fifty, go wherever you like! The Chinese will be as rich as the Americans, and I’ll be on my pension, or dead—” I thanked him for the advice, and left his office. I thought of how my children, perhaps yours, would be born without that striving sense that says life is elsewhere, somewhere better, in the West.

I only want to go where you can grow too.  
All I want is a city you’d be glad to be old with me in.  
All I need is a bed.  
Imagine what humans would’ve done  
if the shade didn’t call us daily to rest.  
Imagine what lack of love would be left.

When I’m fifty I’ll have loved you for half of my life. My younger cousins will be getting married, and their mums will not have to worry about the in-laws’ salaries. We’ll be as rich as the Americans and that’s the end of it, I hope. We’ll be as full as a monk putting his mouth to the stream that flows ceaselessly. We’ll be as complete as his closing his lips, licking the droplets, and taking his leave.

May I grow to slake every thirst I possess,  
except for you. May life come as easily to  
our children as water to the lips. May they  
know when to dip their heads, and when to  
lift.

*Yuan Yang*

**Yuan Yang** is a writer, translator, economist, and campaigner. She is a co-founder of the [Rethinking Economics](#) network and was appointed by the *Financial Times* as their Beijing economics reporter in January 2016. She has been part of the Yorkshire-based [Writing Squad](#) and the [Barbican Young Poets](#) and was also one of six London Laureates in 2015/2016.

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This debate will be being live streamed on the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016 and you can access the live stream [by clicking here](#).

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