

## The Imagined Journey

'Let's not just ask questions like an interview,' She writes.  
'Tell me of your dreams, your wishes and the things you like,  
Of where you'll take me and what we'll see and do,  
The imaginary journey, explores the heart of you.'  
"Ok," I reply. It's easy to imagine the holiday we'd take,  
I've daydreamed this journey often and know the trip we'd make.

Of all the lands and places seen, none I think is finer,  
Than the memories of my time once spent within the land of China.  
I'd take you in July when each day is hot and dry,  
Street markets bustle in the cooler nights, we'll buy,  
Souvenirs and sip cocktails on roof bars against the city's illumination,  
But it's a journey we are taking, not a fortnight's fun vacation.

When the cicada's and the cricket's songs finally fall still,  
We'll lie on beds uncovered in the air-conditioned chill,  
Then climb The Wall into the mountain's purple bands,  
Watch the sun rise out, from the haze of distant lands,  
Where the path before us twists forward, seemingly forever,  
We can choose to turn away, or walk the unknown road together.

The Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, places we must go,  
To understand the present, some history we should know,  
But we won't dwell, or judge in the wrongs of before,  
We look forward to the time and chances life still has in store.  
A rickshaw through the *Hutongs* narrow lanes we'll ride,  
Spiced insects and innards cooked on sticks bravely tried.

Comrades will join us as outside tables fill, drinks appear  
To toast our future fortune with *Baijiu* and cold beer.  
Then to the lake at Hou Hai as the evening turns to night,  
People waltz and sing in the moon and red lantern light,  
And the longing voice of an Erhu wails. In this timeless tableau,  
No choice we'll have, but to fall in love like happened long ago.