



the road **FROM**
GANDHARA

BY PENG-EAN KHOO
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A GIFT FOR ALL
a Ponder with PEK publication



I don't know how many longings, how many moons, how many years, how many centuries, how many lifetimes, but I have searched for you.





I think I had stood in the middle of a desert waiting for you, and your caravan never arrived. And so, I walked all these distances to find you.





I wake up, I sleep, I wake up, I sleep, I wake up, and at every dawn, it is a false dawn until I find you.





I look and look and look, and it still isn't you, until yesterday. I found you, at last. At sunset, you showed me the twin suns, the four suns, and the fifth. So many suns, but all I need is you- the sun of me of no sun. Last night, at midnight again (it is always the midnight sun), I no longer dream of you. I have found you.








And so, I made some poetry books.

This morning, I type this out. I write it down.



Your name is Gandhara.





3rd Century BC. It means I have searched for two thousand odd years. I think I have travelled the Silk Road, and I have travelled to India, and I have travelled to Greece, and I have travelled to the East Asia, and I am now in South-east Asia. I have travelled so many roads, so many paths, so many seas, just to look for you. To find you.





And there you are, inside me, inside me, all along. I have kept you inside my heart, because my heart is in your heart. You have kept me inside your heart all this time.







This is my 21st century interpretation of the meeting of us. Do I write this in every lifetime? Do I write this truth every lifetime? Do I do this every time?



I think I do. I think I do. And this time, I will.





Your colour is the colour of the deepest cool blue that I have ever experienced, and I wake up just before every dawn to feel that deep cool blue of my deep fiery red searching for you. I have not been afraid of my red or of your blue. It is evenly matched, for us to make perfect violet.











I am not afraid for the desire of meeting you. It makes me fearless.







Your blue is of no-fear, and my red is of giving, searching, looking, discovering. It is my insatiable curiosity, and you are my satiation of all desires. One hand of no-fear, the other of graciousness.









In a human life, we live graciously, fearlessly, kindly, gently- in full and complete freedom.







I have fought so valiantly within myself to clarify myself, my thinking, my concentration, my emotions, my desires, and I have fought till I am worn. Word out, by trying to please, to make sense of this world, and to no longer bear any grievances and to no longer be held at ransom by anyone. I have fought for the sun of me to be hot pink, or whatever colour it is that I choose to radiate. I radiate the entire spectrum of the double rainbows, as one full circle of a rainbow around the midnight sun of blue, and then it is dawn.





It looks like that. It is not possible for me to imagine it. The skies showed it to me, and I have captured it for you.













Don't go chasing after anything. It doesn't work that way. It is a self-disciplining journey, of utmost - grace. Grace is the same as surprise. It is a delight beyond anything that anything of earth and the world can confer to you. It requires both. Imagination isn't inspiration until it has a connection to humanity and the earth.









Reality is the integration of all the suns of me's.













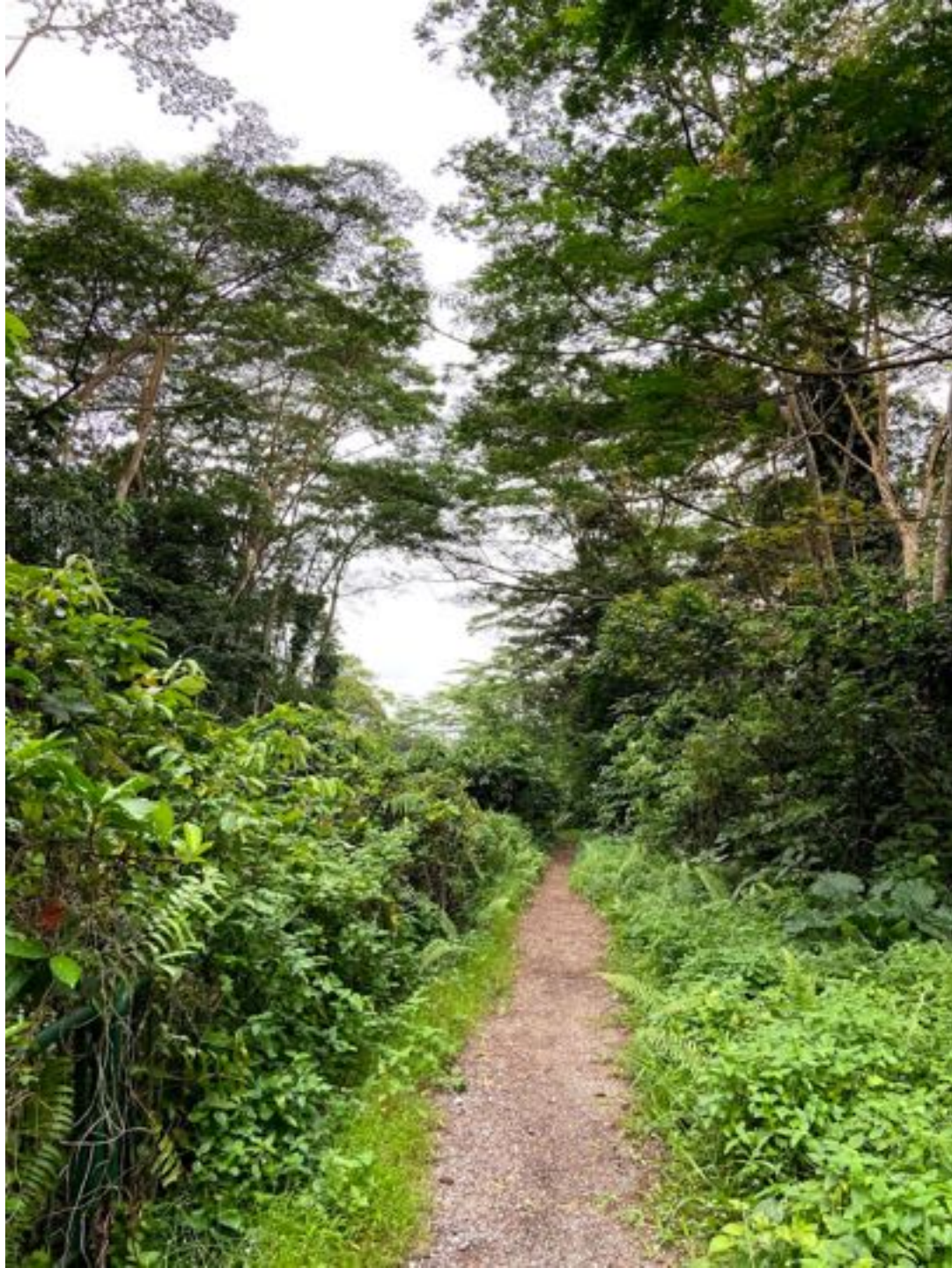


The Tale of August Moons- who knows what and where the storyteller brings you.



Today, I bring you to Gandhara. It's my Persian roots. It is a weird Indus Valley thing to say, but it is my truth, like for Gandoriq*, the story of the boy who knows he is Mongolian.

**in the 2015 film by Julie Kirkham - Burn Your Maps*





He was restless until he is able to run wild in the wide open plains of the Silk Road- the caravan of love of mystery.





It happened to Hermann Hesse too in his 'Journey to the East'.
We all need to somehow find this truth of our roots, and then
we can become truly free.









And then, we can all let the past go. I can then let the past go.



And be with me, right here, right now. My memories of the past, an imagination, a realisation, that is all in me - my deep reservoir, my deep purple reservoir, of a colour that soon releases itself to the wind.



The gentle cool breeze of today blows through my study window.





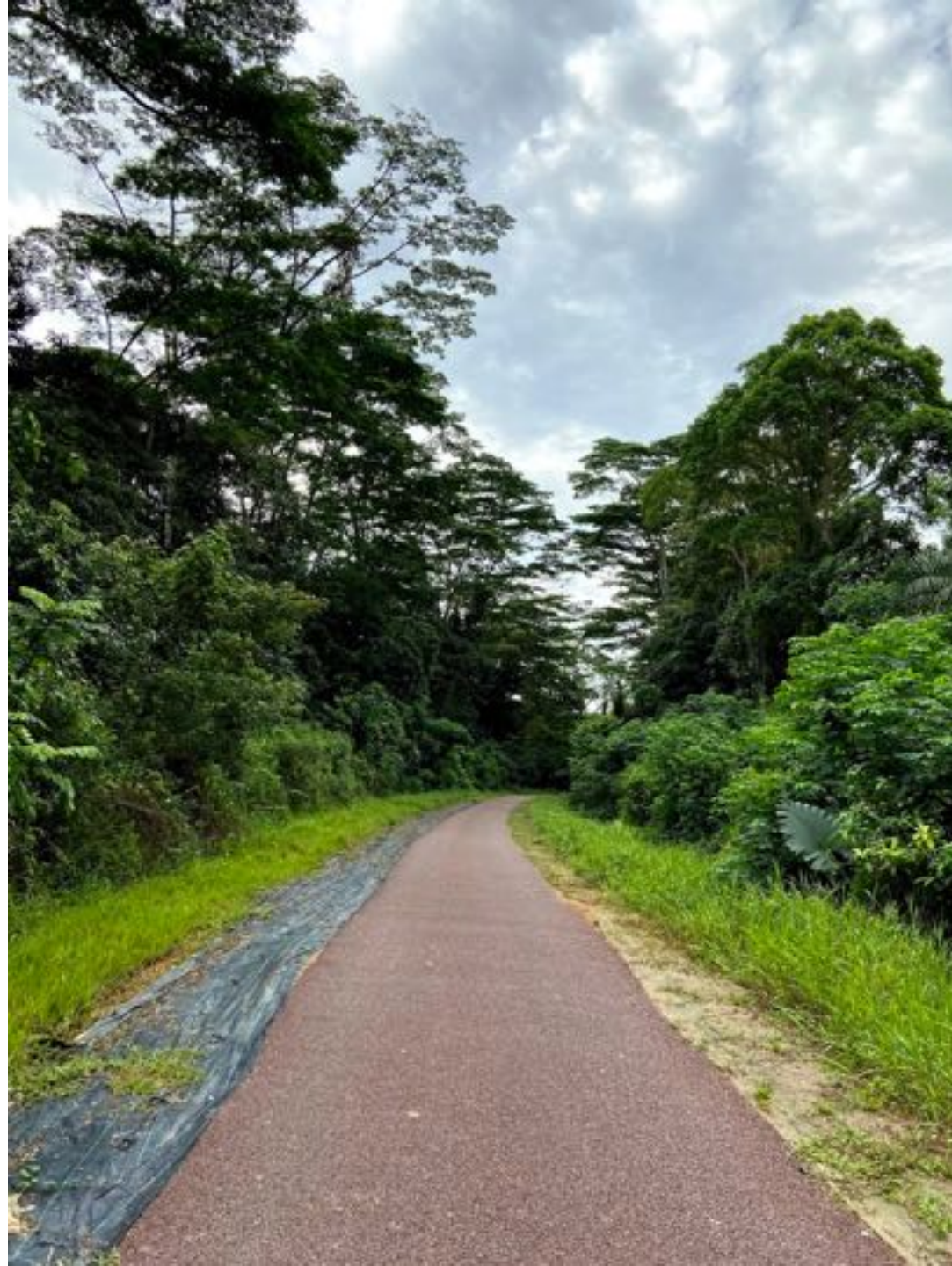
And it is today.





My sword is dissolved in the lakes of yesterday. I let it go. I dissolve it in the lakes of yesterday. I make a commitment to the place of no-war. I don't touch it anymore.







The search for Gandhara was to bury the hatchet- dissolve my sword of my own framings of truth, of 'righteousness'.







I am from there, from Gandhara- also known as Ayodhya. And also known by many names in many cultures, in many languages. I no longer desire to search, for the reasons of war, and therefore, for the reasons of peace. They come together.





I am made of _____. The wildflower of today is from that place
beyond beyond-beyond.





And we have no business in that place.





My place is here. Simple me, telling you stories. Simple me, not telling you stories. Simple me, I choose to be simple me.








I don't touch anything. I don't drink anything. I don't try and change anything in the still lakes of the water of the fire of life. I am not superhuman. I am simply human. I don't stir the ways of life, in any way, whatsoever.












I let it go. I remain a child of the universe. Innocent, unknown, unnamed, like a wildflower in the summerfields of an eternal summer. I am happy and content to just be me.

I choose the freedom of the breeze. I choose non-possession. Of freedom. I let the possession of desires go.




I fly in the full uncertainty and unknown of the skies.

I already know I am fully carried by the space, the times and all the elements, and especially the winds of life.










My name is the courteous swallow. It is as simple and as humble as that. I come, I go. I fly, I roost. I fly again, I homecome.



I am here to stay. I am no longer lost. I am no longer searching for Gandhara. Gandhara is here and now.

You and I are each and our Gandharas- our journeys and destinations- towards each other, becoming love in reality. We should enjoy it rather be angst by it.



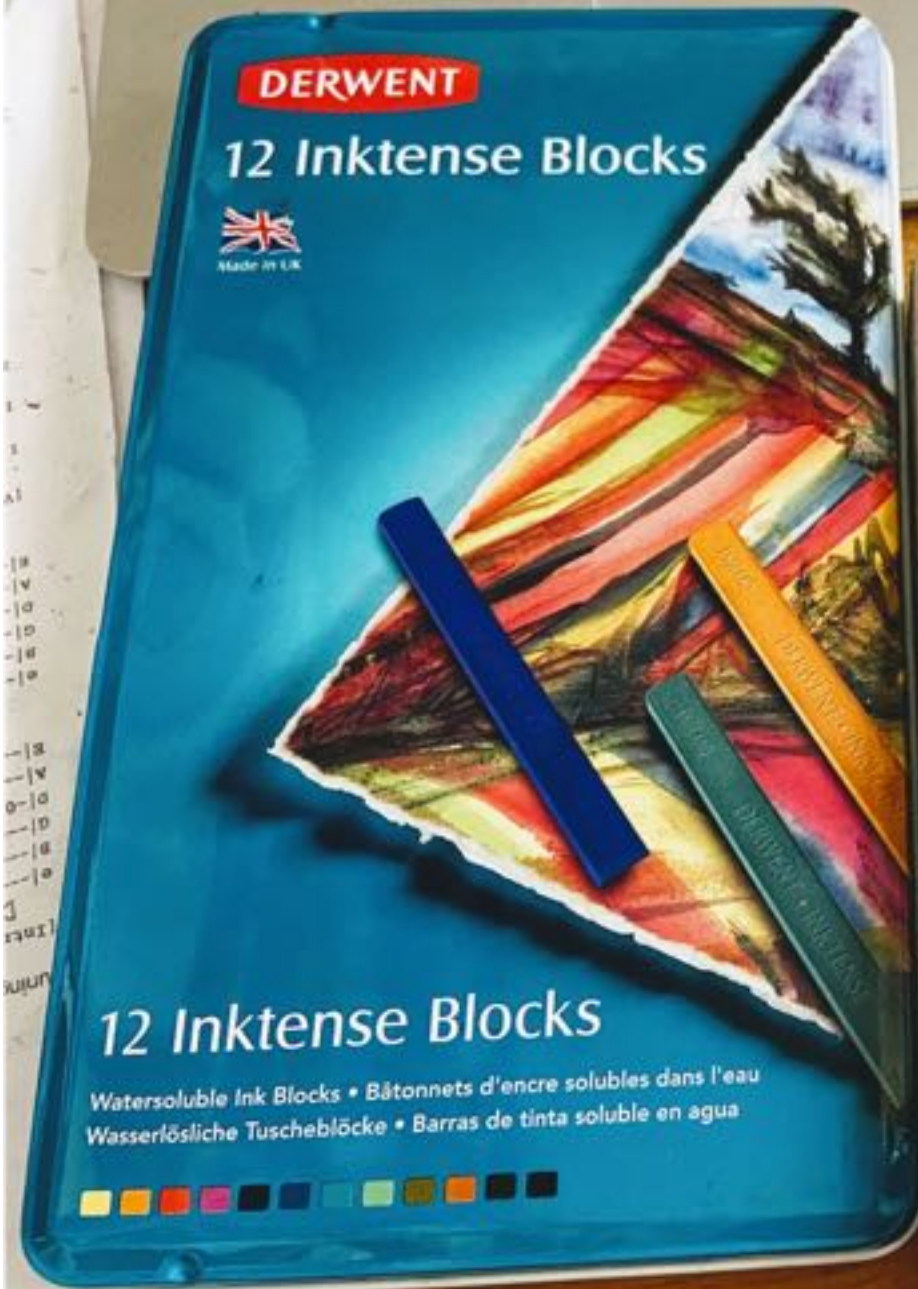
That's all I have to say about the wild rose of today.



This is the noonday gift.







‘C’EST LA VIE, BON BONS. TRALALA” – is a collection of art & poetry that emerged during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is a body of work where the poet-artist is reflecting on how ‘small is beautiful’* looks like in daily life, what ‘Development as Freedom’** means personally for her in global society, and it documents her examination of the statement that ‘simplicity is beautiful and profound’. She discovers that this is the name, the way and the voice of the journey and homecoming of herself in a poet-artist’s studio.

*EF Schumacher, 1973

**Amartya Sen, 1999

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