

Summer

By Chen Chen

You are the ice cream sandwich connoisseur of your generation.

Blessed are your floral shorteralls, your deeply pink fanny pack with travel-size lint roller just in case.

Level of splendiferous in your outfit: 200.

Types of invisible pain stemming from adolescent disasters in classrooms, locker rooms, & quite often Toyota Camrys: at least 10,000.

You are not a jigglypuff, not yet a wigglytuff.

Reporters & fathers call your generation “the worst.”

Which really means “queer kids who could go online & learn that queer doesn’t have to mean disaster.”

Or dead.

Instead, queer means, splendiferously, you.

& you means someone who knows that common flavors for ice cream sandwiches in Singapore include red bean, yam, & honeydew.

Your powers are great, are growing.

One day you will create an online personality quiz that also freshens the breath.

The next day you will tell your father, *You were wrong to say that I had to change.*

To make me promise I would. To make me promise.

& promise.

Source: *Poetry* (March 2021)