

**TOPSY**

**TURVY**

a fantasy fable

You could see the stones on the river bed.

The water flowed like liquid glass.

Cool

and the blue above

expanded into the black universe

sparkling with unseen stars

Larry Languid touched the ripples  
his fingers were with paradise

the pea-pod boat stuffed with tourists  
steered by young natives  
all his life Larry had felt he did not  
belong

constantly shunned and driven away  
because he was different

so he had sought happiness  
through learning

books and science

beauty and art

time and history

love and sex

knowledge and experience

all fleeting

up

then down

now he didn't search

now nature was presenting

to him

what his soul had

told him existed

paradise regained

more than life

more than world

more than the treachery of people

more than wealth love happiness

fame and fortune

here was bliss

how come?

Colour

the rainbow's outpouring

7 shades of 7 colours

7 shades of 7 shades

Sounds so numerous

the feathers of a bird could not

match

the air

was disturbed by everything

many times

the water surface made music

the breezes sang

the grasses on the banks

danced

the clouds egg white

posed

the rocks listened

showing their lines in arcs

Breath

Murmurs

All creatures and elements

together had something

to say

to show

to the receiver

Larry was a sensitive one

He dreaded having to return

Why couldn't he stay

here?

in the heart of China

on the Shendong River

a tributary of the Yangtse

China: one of the greatest single

civilisations of the world

at one with life and

country

The Chinese had no need of  
anyone from outside  
a hermit nation  
  
from the U.K.  
  
London  
and the countryside  
once again Larry had been expelled  
  
so why go back  
but how could he stay?  
  
he had come here on business  
with his wife Sandy

he couldn't leave her to stay here

Could he?

Forget !

enjoy the view

as that eagle drifting from its rock

I could never enjoy anything like

that.

I have been made to fear too much.

Maybe I can overcome my fear.

Brown

what a dull word for such a

vigorous colour  
and here there are so many  
tones of brown  
of red, of green,  
of yellow,  
blue  
all merging and  
reflecting each other  
what joy  
He feels elevated  
  
the light that is the sun  
that is the warmth  
this is glorious

this is passion

His soul could really

come alive

in this place

bored with Britain

with the bomb

he didn't want children

nor family nor friends

he wanted to escape

he didn't want jobs

he wanted

he wanted

**FREEDOM**

**PEACE**

**AND**

**HAPPINESS**

None of these

were available

where he came from

always school

work jobs

duty rights

fake and false and phoney

maybe the best society

might do

but was it the best he

Larry Languid

could manage?

Sandy was aware of his feelings

She would help

She always did

Poor Larry.

Upstream the boat sailed  
the tourists were singing  
home-songs

I will ignore that  
thinks Larry

I will become this place  
for the few hours  
my money has bought

Oh God, it's so beautiful  
what shall I do?

it's impossible

no opportunity

will come

I must make the most of it

memory

take good note

be washed in

light and colour

remember the

vegetation and water

the natives

the birds and the animals

yes, yes, I'll stay

somehow

## THE SOMEHOW

the boat is rested at the river bank

all take refreshment on land

in a ramshackle café

Larry and Sandy

sit away from the others

quiet

warmth

tranquillity

when around the corner

of the tea-house

a native strolled who  
was the image exact  
of Larry Languid

Hu-Chi:                    May I take tea with you, please?

Larry Languid:            Of course. Sit down. Please.

We look like each other.

Hu-Chi:                    Yes, I know. That is why I have asked to  
join you.

I have been waiting for you.

Sandy Languid:            Where did you learn to speak  
English?

Hu-Chi:                    Here.

In my village.  
When I was a little boy,  
an Englishman came.  
He was a doctor.  
I begged him to teach me his strange  
language.  
Over many years I studied  
with him till he died.

Larry Languid:                      What is your name?

Hu-Chi:                      My name is Hu-Chi.  
  
I live alone here.  
  
A recluse, since my parents are both dead.  
  
I do not make friends.  
  
Would you like to see my house?  
  
You have time.  
  
It is only a short distance.  
  
It is on a hillside.

Larry:           Yes. I would like to very much  
                      Sandy, will you come?  
                      Please?

Sandy:           I'd like to very much.  
                      Let's go.

Larry: (aside to Sandy)  
                      It's odd, I don't feel afraid of him.

Sandy: (aside to Larry)  
                      No, I don't.  
                      He looks amazingly like you.

Larry:           My name is Larry Languid, by the way

Hu-Chi: L a r r y L a n g u i d.  
Good.

Larry: And this is my wife:  
Sandy Languid; Hu-Chi.

Hu-Chi: Hallo S a n d y. Please, this way.

