



Dear  
Alter  
Jiaqiao  
Liu

# Dear Alter

Jiaqiao  
Liu

AUCKLAND  
UNIVERSITY  
PRESS



First published 2025  
Auckland University Press  
Waipapa Taumata Rau  
University of Auckland  
Private Bag 92019  
Auckland 1142  
New Zealand  
[www.aucklanduniversitypress.co.nz](http://www.aucklanduniversitypress.co.nz)

© Jiaqiao Liu, 2025

ISBN 978 1 77671 169 7

A catalogue record for this book is available from the  
National Library of New Zealand

This book is copyright. Apart from fair dealing for  
the purpose of private study, research, criticism or  
review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part  
may be reproduced by any process without prior  
permission of the publisher. The moral rights of the  
author have been asserted.

Design by Greg Simpson

This book was printed on FSC® certified paper

Printed in Singapore by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd

## Contents

INTERIOR CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC		
AS OF NOV 2019 & MAY NEVER REOPEN		1
i.	mummy's little robot	3
	a systems approach to paper boats	7
	Telenoid-mediated conversations in an elder care facility	9
	nonconsensual translation in the extended family WeChat	16
	★You Are Here	18
	transmissions from an empty museum	20
	the doppelgänger effect	21
	Dear Kelbo	23
	transmissions from an empty museum	25
ii.	Dear Alter	27
	Dear Rhi	32
	Alter's sister on opening night	34
	sweepstakes for a moon burial	38
	transmissions from an empty museum	42
	Cháng'é and her robo-rabbits	43
	variations on homophones for the accidental	49
	一不小心	50
	pillar of salt	56
	Alter's long-lost sibling	58
	transmissions from an empty museum (after hours)	60

iii.	Computational Theory of Mind, and other metaphors	63
	transmissions from an empty museum	71
	the first android soul threw the bureaucracy	
	of heaven into a tizzy	72
	yet another grief dream	79
	transmissions from an empty museum	
	(closed for refurbishment)	81
	arrivals: blood moon	82
	Inorganic Carcinisation in the Neo-Cambrian Era	91
	fragmentary transmission from the end of the world	94
	Case Report: Assessing Soul-Status of Anomaly A6	
	to Determine Eligibility for Reincarnation	
	[Supplemental Transcript]	95
	Years later, the eldest Telenoid daydreams on the job	97
	 Notes and Acknowledgements	 104

INTERIOR CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC  
AS OF NOV 2019 & MAY NEVER REOPEN

some forms of flux are considered finished states  
or, at least, metastable. dissociation  
of the atomised self. swapping parts  
down at the body shop, hip-mod out  
triple-joints in. black box dusted off  
trimmed chrome. slap on a name  
and call it a day. repeat  
per auto-update, cycle,

or till the great Wheel runs dry.  
at the end of the world  
the oldest soul got put in a baby  
and baby got given a box  
full of gender, and, y'know, children  
are scientists, and you can never say  
*you are allowed one toy and one toy only*  
to a soul that recalls every gender it's ever gnawed

but not yet. not yet. a year later

I began to see what ate at me.