

Zheng Xiaoqiong (translated by Eleanor Goodman)

Lychee Grove

In fragrant lithe curves, the sun falls on the paulownia-covered hills
the lychee grove with its shadows and dark, inside its spacious
body the dusk shimmers, a cool brook plays a thousand-year-old
country melody—it can't adjust to the Industrial Age
it knows nothing of the hustle and bustle, it retains
an ancient slowness and sorrow, it lies like a sick patient
oily, dark, silted up with the stench of industrial waste
no one comes to listen to its low cries, on the hillocks
excavators uproot the lychees, the felled trees
topple onto the naked yellow earth, the delicate flowers
fall, the fragrance fades, here in the setting sun
I see Phoenix Avenue, how many of the people on it
have come from afar like me, to enjoy the prosperity of this Industrial Age
houses and radio towers spring up in the lychee grove I watched being felled,
the homes with Chinese dark-tiled roofs are replaced with a Western style
in this village, no one is like me
listening to what is behind the prosperity, the weeping brook and clear-cut
lychee trees in their grief, an old ancestral temple in a high-rise jungle

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荔枝林

在暗香温柔的弯曲间，落日上了桐木岭
幽暗与明亮的荔枝林，黄昏在它空阔的
身体波光粼粼，寒溪吹奏着数千年来的
乡村乐曲，啊，它无法适应工业时代
喧哗与繁华都与它无关，它还保留着
旧有时代的缓慢和忧伤，它像病患者
油腻，黝黑，淤塞工业废物的腥臭
没有谁来倾听它低低的哭泣，山冈上
挖土机挖掘着荔枝林，被砍伐的树木
倒在裸露的黄土间，那些细小的花朵
散落在地，暗香渐失，啊，落日里
我看见凤凰大道上，有多少人像我
从远方来这里，分享工业时代的繁华
目睹砍伐的荔枝林间竖起厂房，机台
中国情调的青瓦屋舍换成西洋风景
在这个村庄，没有谁会像我一样
倾听繁荣背后，哭泣的寒溪与砍伐的
荔枝林的忧伤，高楼丛林中守旧的祠堂