

QING (青)

“The Dream of a Common Language”

How am I to tell you, when each thought
Remains stubbornly in a language you cannot understand?

To tell you
You are like that ancient color, qing, for which there is no name besides Chinese.
This shade defines the value of jade,
The dipping hue of sunlight through a paper umbrella,
Beauty found amidst everyday things.

To tell you
My heart aches like the poet Li Bai (李白)
Who, thousands of years ago, awoke to a moonbeam gathering like dewy frost under his feet,
And recalled with a tender pain: The same cool light
Falls upon his loved ones,
Reaching them when he cannot.

“Lunar New Year’s Eve”

I lay awake with this inexplicable feeling
The evening is the living inkblot which spreads its faded edges,
following the silken threads it was planted upon, an image yet to be revealed.

I am running and feel
The wood of the gazebo as it scrapes under my feet;

A breeze tugs on my qipao

A soft brush of your hair overwhelms the sensation.

The warm glow of smoky mist above,

The moon peeks out shyly

Knowing it cannot compare to you, it veils its beauty in your presence.

The elderly feed their grandchildren bits of sweet rice cake,

A husband adjusts his wife's hairpin

As she bounces their baby upon her knee.

Every eye is fixed above, each rise and fall of a breast

Follows the swaying dance of clouds above;

Except mine. For me,

You have swallowed up the whole universe.

Then, the sky blooms with a million lotuses,

I am kissing you and it feels like praying.

“Pond”

The koi

escapes its home,

And sends rippling through,

A sky of exploding stars,

Yet all I see when I look into these waters

Are your eyes;

They swallow

Galaxies.