

## **My body, a wreckage**

Wings of words lift me higher  
in sky's immense shadow  
my head shrouded in a castle's gloom

Ten emperors prop up a single bone of my body  
Ten bolts of silk and satin covering my eyes

Ten madmen  
please hold my clean soul  
my everlasting sorrow

*1992*

## **Bat**

The bat is an inseparable part of the night  
Its flying makes a moonless night even darker  
Unable to see its convoluted face or its destination  
a silly child captures a young bat  
and his sleepwalking night fills with noises

Don't ask about the auspicious dreams  
Two bats can become a black mist exuding corruption's smell

Now bats are gathering near the end of night  
They cry and their crying turns bright, like a jar of salt  
Children leap up from their curled bodies. Burst of cold air.  
Bats, their wings damp, fly over

Poor bats swooping near the ground  
their skinny bones draped in huge black robes  
Curious children bump into each other in the yard

Inky black shadows. Screaming. With their short claws,  
The bats rummaged through the village before returning  
to their cave and gathering quietly, a vast darkness.  
They hang in the cave in their unique style,  
overlapping each other, like a mysterious ancient statue  
torn apart, shiny black death machine.

*2000*

## Death of Han Fei (excerpt)

Autumn. I can't just ignore the law of wisdom.  
I go outside. Heavy rain splashes on my old, declining body.  
My heart grows cold. The treacherous have all the resources.  
School of law gets bits of it practiced in the Kingdom Qin.

234 BC, Qin attacked Han—

A war targeting thinkers was directed at Han Fei's brain.  
Han Fei, with rooster crown on his head, stamped on their tricks.  
He treaded on politics as if skipping over trash.  
He kept moving, as if walking on running streams.  
A proud rooster.

He remained calm when he was murdered. On his face  
this line was written: *Seeking to weaken the Qin*.  
Sitting in the autumn light, I can't ignore him.  
On my face the story of a fictional war is written.  
In my dreams, I must start a war of words with Han Fei.  
But I'd rather be him engaged in a conversation with Li Si,  
another fictional character. Their glorious moment  
gone in a flash.

I've never issued an eviction order. I repeatedly think about  
What Li Si said: "Take Han first, to scare other countries."  
I wake up in a cold sweat even though the fictitious tiger has left my side.  
I seem to have felt Han Fei's Adam's apple, like a fish bone  
crushed in Li Si's pleading.

What a treacherous brother who plays tricks.  
But Han Fei not only grabbed and squeezed Li Si's throat  
but also the throat of Emperor Qin.

2009

## Picking Ferns

I haven't been home in three months  
What's my father been doing?  
The road behind the mountain  
is covered with tree shadows.  
I push the knife-shaped leaves aside  
and walk toward my parents, step by step.  
In their world, birds sing in the ample sunlight,  
two mounds of yellow earth snuggling—  
Ferns encircling their graves grow unchecked.  
Death has given birth to robust life.  
The ferns my father planted are spreading happily.  
My mother looks the same as last time.  
She tells me it rained fiercely these past months  
alarming your father from his long, snoring sleep.  
He woke up and began planting ferns.  
Now I am back, surrounded by green, green ferns

*2017*

### **Trip to South America (excerpt)**

Tonight  
half asleep half awake  
I'm crawling along the earth  
from Beijing to New York,  
my stubborn stubble  
sprouting day by day  
only skipping one night in between.  
When sunlight pierces the cabin  
a Chinese baby cries loudly.  
A tiny child  
with thin eardrums  
can hear clearly even  
tiny noises around the earth.  
I'm already deaf  
spinning along with the earth  
tumbling over mountains and rivers.  
What used to be my internal organs  
now grows over my body

*2017*

## Saddle Mountain

Li Bai visited the Saddle Mountain—  
That's a story in ancient China.  
Here in Monterrey, Mexico,  
there's also a Saddle Mountain  
in the shape of a horse saddle,  
shrouded in rain.  
I've slept for three nights straight  
always waking up at midnight  
dreaming of my father's skinny ankles.  
He and Li Bai are coming here  
to ride up Saddle Mountain—  
I begin running around in the rain  
as if lost.

2018