**Dusk Field of Vision**

**Zhu Ti**

 On the public square outside the window, an oppressive grey slab of sky.

 Like flowing clouds, smoke, floating, dispersing.

 Perhaps it is an unfinished theatre! I heard it is like this, planning here a big-scale city gathering place, for bringing together interesting things and so they finally design this theatre. The wood of the white roof beams and the rice-coloured bricks already appear so aged.

 Dusk, this rotten and weak yellow dusk.

 Children start to play games again in the public square. A group of children, from who knows where, gathers together. They are so interested, playing together harmoniously. Yes, those games may be so wretched, despicable, and naturally dull and deficient games, but they are still so happy playing something.

 The sky darkens more and more. Wind stirs up the electric wires.

 I cannot say for sure that it will snow. In my heart, I think like that. Leaning on the little dirty dark glass window facing the street, I see the door lights being lit on the hotel to the west and east of the street. So many men and women travellers begin to hang back again on the public square.

 Do the children's games throw them into disorder?

 Such a gloomy and suffering upheaval of a tableau.

 I quietly use my finger on the glass window to scratch unclear streaks on the surface. My happiness and loneliness are difficult to express. I am a bit obsessed with this tableau and a little bit at a loss.

 Scratching, scratching, the sky darkens more.

 I cannot see the electric wires trembling in the wind. I listen to the roar of the wind.

 On the grey public square, the children went back.

 The incomplete theatre remains sitting there, languishing in loneliness. Piles of wood surround it as the accumulated snow exudes a deathly pale light.
 I think: perhaps those travellers have already found their short-time home?

 A selfish motive, like this I congratulate a birthday.

 Night suppresses the public square.

 The pedestal lamp behind me is turned on. My field of vision completely blurs.

 I start my every evening night class...

 Xinjing, January 1944

“Bangwan de shiye” (Dusk Field of Vision),

Daban Huawen meiri (Chinese Osaka Daily), April 1944 (11. 12), p. 31.

Translated by Norman Smith, uploaded January 2022.