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Suicide Prose



Selected Poems by Xu Lizhi (许立志)

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Xu Lizhi (许立志) (1990-2014) was a Foxconn worker who committed suicide on 30 September 2014, at the age of 24, in Shenzhen, China. Xu's poems are a snapshot of life on the assembly line and the pressures of a timing your existence to the frenetic pace of demand for consumer goods.

—
These poems were translated by Nao and put up in a blog on LibCom..
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Nào (闹) is unrest, noise, uproar. It stands for the proletarian troublemakers, for the revolts of peasants, workers and the unemployed against expropriation, exploitation and exclusion.

—
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不必为我的离开感到惊讶
Shouldn't be surprised at my leaving

更不必叹息，或者悲伤
Even less should you sigh or grieve

我来时很好，去时，也很好
I was fine when I came, and fine when I left.

-- Xu Lizhi, 30 September 2014

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-- Xu Lizhi, 30 September 2014

《我弥留之际》

On My Deathbed

我想再看一眼大海，目睹我半生的泪水有多汪洋

I want to take another look at the ocean, behold the vastness of tears
from half a lifetime

我想再爬一爬高高的山头，试着把丢失的灵魂喊回来

I want to climb another mountain, try to call back the soul that I've lost

我还想摸一摸天空，碰一碰那抹轻轻的蓝

I want to touch the sky, feel that blueness so light

可是这些我都办不到了，我就要离开这个世界了

But I can't do any of this, so I'm leaving this world

所有听说过我的人们啊

Everyone who's heard of me

20

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1

《我就那样站着入睡》
I Fall Asleep, Just Standing Like That

眼前的纸张微微发黄
The paper before my eyes fades yellow

我用钢笔在上面凿下深浅不一的黑
With a steel pen I chisel on it uneven black

里面盛满打工的词汇
Full of working words

车间，流水线，机台，上岗证，加班，薪水……
Workshop, assembly line, machine, work card, overtime, wages...

我被它们治得服服贴贴
They've trained me to become docile

2

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2

我说与不说
Whether I speak or not

都会跟这个社会
With this society I'll still

发生冲突
Conflict

-- 7 June 2013

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我说与不说
Whether I speak or not

都会跟这个社会
With this society I'll still

发生冲突
Conflict

-- 7 June 2013

19

《冲突》
Conflict

他们都说
They all say

我是个话很少的孩子
I'm a child of few words

对此我并不否认
This I don't deny

实际上
But actually

18

我不会呐喊，不会反抗
Don't know how to shout or rebel

不会控诉，不会埋怨
How to complain or denounce

只默默地承受着疲惫
Only how to silently suffer exhaustion

驻足时光之初
When I first set foot in this place

我只盼望每月十号那张灰色的薪资单
I hoped only for that grey pay slip on the tenth of each month

赐我以迟到的安慰
To grant me some belated solace

3

《冲突》
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为此我必须磨去棱角，磨去语言
For this I had to grind away my corners, grind away my words

拒绝旷工，拒绝病假，拒绝事假
Refuse to skip work, refuse sick leave, refuse leave for private reasons

拒绝迟到，拒绝早退
Refuse to be late, refuse to leave early

流水线旁我站立如铁，双手如飞
By the assembly line I stood straight like iron, hands like flight,

多少白天，多少黑夜
How many days, how many nights

我就那样，站着入睡
Did I - just like that - standing fall asleep?

-- 20 August 2011

4

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-- 20 August 2011

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昏黄的灯光下我一再发呆，傻笑
Under the dull yellow light again I stare blankly, chuckling like an idiot

来回踱步，低声唱歌，阅读，写诗
I pace back and forth, singing softly, reading, writing poems

每当我打开窗户或者柴门
Every time I open the window or the wicker gate

我都像一位死者
I seem like a dead man

把棺材盖，缓缓推开
Slowly pushing open the lid of a coffin.

-- 2 December 2013

17

昏黄的灯光下我一再发呆，傻笑
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-- 2 December 2013

17

《出租屋》
Rented Room

十平方米左右的空间
A space of ten square meters

局促，潮湿，终年不见天日
Cramped and damp, no sunlight all year

我在这里吃饭，睡觉，拉屎，思考
Here I eat, sleep, shit, and think

咳嗽，偏头痛，生老，病不死
Cough, get headaches, grow old, get sick but still fail to die

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《出租屋》
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《一颗螺丝掉在地上》
A Screw Fell to the Ground

一颗螺丝掉在地上
A screw fell to the ground

在这个加班的夜晚
In this dark night of overtime

垂直降落，轻轻一响
Plunging vertically, lightly clinking

不会引起任何人的注意
It won't attract anyone's attention

就像在此之前
Just like last time

5

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某个相同的夜晚
On a night like this

有个人掉在地上
When someone plunged to the ground

-- 9 January 2014

某个相同的夜晚
On a night like this

有个人掉在地上
When someone plunged to the ground

-- 9 January 2014

《最后的墓地》

The Last Graveyard

机台的鸣叫也打着瞌睡

Even the machine is nodding off

密封的车间贮藏疾病的铁

Sealed workshops store diseased iron

薪资隐藏在窗帘后面

Wages concealed behind curtains

仿似年轻打工者深埋于心底的爱情

Like the love that young workers bury at the bottom of their hearts

没有时间开口，情感徒留灰尘

With no time for expression, emotion crumbles into dust

6

无声的求救信号

A silent distress signal, again and again

再一次地听到

Only to hear, again and again

绝望的回响

The echo of desperation.

-- 13 July 2014

15

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-- 13 July 2014

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我比谁都渴望站起来
I want to stand up more than anyone else

可是我的腿不答应
But my legs won't cooperate

我的胃不答应
My stomach won't cooperate

我全身的骨头都不答应
All the bones of my body won't cooperate

我只能这样平躺着
I can only lie flat

在黑暗里一次次地发出
In this darkness, sending out

14

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14

他们有着铁打的胃
They have stomachs forged of iron

盛满浓稠的硫酸，硝酸
Full of thick acid, sulfuric and nitric

工业向他们收缴来不及流出的泪
Industry captures their tears before they have the chance to fall

时辰走过，他们清醒全无
Time flows by, their heads lost in fog

产量压低了年龄，疼痛在日夜加班
Output weighs down their age, pain works overtime day and night

还未老去的头晕潜伏生命
In their lives, dizziness before their time is latent

7

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7

皮肤被治具强迫褪去
The jig forces the skin to peel

顺手镀上一层铝合金
And while it's at it, plates on a layer of aluminum alloy

有人还在坚持着，有人含病离去
Some still endure, while others are taken by illness

我在他们中间打盹，留守青春的
I am dozing between them, guarding

最后一块墓地
The last graveyard of our youth.

-- 21 December 2011

8

以前也不是没有
Didn't exist before

只是都不像这次
But they didn't come

来得这么突然
As suddenly

这么凶猛
As ferociously

一再地挣扎
Repeatedly struggle

竟全是徒劳
But all is futile

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But all is futile

13

《我一生中的路还远远没有走完》
My Life's Journey is Still Far from Complete

这是谁都没有料到的
This is something no one expected

我一生中的路
My life's journey

还远远没有走完
Is far from over

就要倒在半路上了
But now it's stalled at the halfway mark

类似的困境
It's not as if similar difficulties

12

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9



9

《我咽下一枚铁做的月亮》
I Swallowed a Moon Made of Iron

我咽下一枚铁做的月亮
I swallowed a moon made of iron

他们把它叫做螺丝
They refer to it as a nail

我咽下这工业的废水，失业的订单
I swallowed this industrial sewage, these unemployment documents

那些低于机台的青春早早夭亡
Youth stooped at machines die before their time

我咽下奔波，咽下流离失所
I swallowed the hustle and the destitution

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10

咽下人行天桥，咽下长满水锈的生活
Swallowed pedestrian bridges, life covered in rust

我再咽不下了
I can't swallow any more

所有我曾经咽下的现在都从喉咙汹涌而出
All that I've swallowed is now gushing out of my throat

在祖国的领土上铺成一首
Unfurling on the land of my ancestors

耻辱的诗
Into a disgraceful poem.

-- 19 December 2013

11

咽下人行天桥，咽下长满水锈的生活
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