

YE HUI

IN THE EXHIBITION HALL

Translated from Chinese by Dong Li

Two middle-aged men before an ancient map
Look for where they are

The bronze birds are now rotten
Closer to Giacometti

The bronze mirror seems forever to show nothing
But patterns on its back because the face that faces it is gone

A few professor types are having a discussion
In a low voice, a beam of spotlight
Shines on their heads

In fact, many intellectuals spend much time
Researching history

Yet thunder, lightning, fire
Coughs and frozen brushes
Remain all too unbearable

Perhaps they just like parts of it
Such as garden, wine, silk, or as many
A maid as possible, quiet, soundless

Like this stone statue
Head hanging low, her face locked
In an attentively absorbing smile

Delicate mouth, nose, hairdo
So vivid, unlikely sculpted

More like a hand
Had brushed off the dust buried deep in her face

And the dust floats
In the hallway that leads to the street

There is a new-generation photographer
Wearing a cap, who tries to capture
The breath and beat of this city

By his side, an ancient river boils
Bursts of thin mist

THE HIGHWAY

The highway looks
Like an illusion, on the pitted ground
Separating on both sides
Decaying towns and crowds

Like a bright and black ribbon

One day, can our souls
Leave like this, along this
Bottomless river
Endlessly