



University of Iowa

International Writing Program Archive of Residents' Work

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Writing Sample

Han-Yong Jeong

Includes "Spring Letter" and "Snowy Road."

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Han-Yong Jeong

Spring Letter

We dwell between two points;
I am stuck in my island
and you in an island you made up.
But after long windings we may converge in the end.
Outside of this world,
you send me letters of fog scent and spring hues.
how are you... I miss you... my only...
These are not for a new start but rather for an end,
that only now confirming our vivid traces for the first time.
But when this world turns upside down and the withered leaves bud again
and petals flutter in front of peoples' eyes,
when white light pours down
on every rise and fall of the wave,
one phrase of my letter may seep deep into your island
and one phrase of yours may be engraved clear in mine.
Who can say
that they won't become a plaintive rhyme or fate itself
or some dirt I miss
with aching heart.

*

Snowy Road

In the last afternoon of my life filled with follies
I turn up my collar and go out to meet you braving the snowstorm.
After having turned left twice at Sanbon
I drive along across Pankyo-Kuri highway at the foot of Suri mountain.
You'll be standing at the end of that road.
Snowflakes and dust, mingled, hit the front window.
The car antenna moans, somber.
A brief forecast announces heavy rain is expected all over the country
and that the next few days will be harsh with snow.
I rather wish all the world would be frozen solid
and fall into a deep sleep, shutting down everything.
Before I pass the tunnel, I hand 10,000 won for the toll and get 9,000 back.
I know too well that you are not there.
No, you are not there.
But your absence is the reason of my being.
As the snowflakes become larger, boundaries disappear.
They block my sight, and I feel your warm hand
No car keeps the speed limit of 100km
and my old Excel, excited, also glides fast.
In a blink of a second
I see my body slip and shatter along with the beat-up car.
Though I have to drive many miles before I reach you
I see the steering wheel piercing my heart,
the crushed bumper, the windowpanes crushed like grains of rice.
White snow falls over the dark night of my soul.
Through the eye of the snow
I look into my snow-covered eyes, cautiously, through the hole of the smashed door.
It/is/over.
Snow pours in through the hole and covers my bloody heart.
Leaving my body behind, I slowly rise and escape the car.
I have to walk for a while until I reach the place
where my lonely name will be engraved as a snow flower.
