

Shi Xiaojun
Translated by Ouyang Yu

from **Yellow Earth** **Red Earth**

THE DUST

on the yellow earth outside a castle on the yellow earth
i'd seen corpses of poets one after another in those years
standing outside the wall
in the sun
as a matter of fact, nothing of their profundity was left after their death
particularly their philosophy
i had been worshipping
later i left the yellow earth
and came to the south
one day a gust of wind carrying dust swept past me
and a poet came out of the wind
he said, where do you come from?
i said, from the chinese mainland!
he said, do you know chinese characters?
i nodded my head
and then he walked into the wind

for many years, i have encountered many corpses of the poets
they have come to the south one after another
and have smuggled their philosophy into this land

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