

Thoughts of Hanoi

Nguyen Thi Vinh, translated by Nguyen Ngoc Bich

The night is deep and chill
as in early autumn. Pitchblack,
it thickens after each lightning flash.
I dream of Hanoi:
5 Co-ngu Road
ten years of separation
the way back sliced by a frontier of hatred.
I want to bury the past
to burn the future
10 still I yearn
still I fear
those endless nights
waiting for dawn.

Brother,
15 how is Hang Dao now?
How is Ngoc Son temple?
Do the trains still run
each day from Hanoi
to the neighboring towns?
20 To Bac-ninh, Cam-giang, Yen-bai,
the small villages, islands
of brown thatch in a lush green sea?

The girls
bright eyes
25 ruddy cheeks
four-piece dresses
raven-bill scarves
sowing harvesting
spinning weaving
30 all year round,
the boys
ploughing
transplanting
in the fields
35 in their shops
running across
the meadow at evening
to fly kites
and sing alternating songs.

http://www.nexuslearning.net/books/Elements_of_lit_Course6/20th%20Century/Collection%2012/Thoughts%20of%20Hanoi.htm