

Fascination for Windows

KIM HAENGSOOK

Translated by Léo-Thomas Brylowski

I told you the reason I came here so often was because of the giant windows. The number of stars we see in the night sky increases as the quality of telescopes improves.

What? The sudden rise in coffee shops in the neighborhood is due to giant windows? To the youth of a hundred years ago, glass windows were a modern and mysterious object. Kids have been getting scolded for breaking windows in every alley throughout the world for the last hundred years. I think it's all the same whether we have windows or not.

When you said it was all the same, your face looked like the world's most naïve for an instant. You idiot, as the bright coffee shop windows push back the night, the darkness takes your face away like a reflection in the mirror.

I drink coffee as I study. My goal is to pass the exam and become a civil servant. One who finishes work at 6pm sharp.

I can witness the 6 o'clock magic from where I'm sitting. The astonishing spectacle . . . Light bulbs hanging from second floor ceilings inside coffee shops appear into space one by one behind their windows. When I look at the light bulbs hanging in the blue sky at 8 in the evening . . . I somehow feel like I'm losing friends, one by one. Behind their windows.

I think people have continued to love windows for the past one hundred years. A white bird is seen flying through a tea house window. Two people, one who thinks the window is fake, and one who thinks the bird is fake, sit facing each other and sip coffee.

