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*To X (Written on
This Device You Made)*

On the last day of September, a 24-year-old migrant worker... jumped out of a window of a residential dormitory run by his employer, Foxconn, the huge electronics manufacturing company... that makes the majority of the world's Apple iPhones.

—*Washington Post*

I.

Pick it up.

Black glass our mirror when it's

off but it is never

off. Press home button

now. Flex. Press.

My fingerprint my hot oils is that

your finger pressing the button into place now on

assembly line in Shenzhen

before it's wiped clean

I see you I think I

see you load your

poem onto it, into me, into me now *Did you, just like that, standing,*

fall asleep Did you fall farther than you meant Did you

mean me to be reading this *I want*

to touch the sky/feel that blueness so light/

but I can't do

*any of this/so I'm
leaving this
world/I was fine
when I came/and fine when I
left* In this blue touchlight
fine rain starts
scrolling down

2.

On the contract, there are four options. Two show you will consent and two show you will not. Do not tick the options which indicate you are not willing. Tick the two which say you are. If you tick the boxes which say you are not willing, the form will be canceled.

3.

What do you see? Under
razorbright lights
blue hats blue jackets
every identification card
taken away long ago you
came 28 hours by bus

Rules are: no long nails
no yawning no sitting
on the floor no talking
or walking quickly no being
late no transients or preteens
no families *If you doze off*

*and fall against the machines and
there is a live wire* no one will
save you The workshop
still as a ravine in autumn
when you slump and slide
back off your stool it's
a hare breaking out of the
underbrush

4.

Workers have up to ten minutes for visits to the toilet Such visits are possible only if a supervisor is available and willing to stand in for the workers on the shop floor The toilets are equipped with cameras When a worker's time is up a loudspeaker calls for him by name until he returns He returns For now

5.

That night rain's pouring into
the underpass
fills up to the brim—cup of opaque
liquid crystal display—frame—shield—

If you get lost in the city you will be
replaced *I have people lined up to
replace you* \$1.85 per hour no errors

Now you turn your head to see
the train coming
rain torn by wind, unstoppable rain, fetid rain

It's scentless They rinse your uniform so many times
it's scentless

6.

I pick it up. I ask it Who made you *I don't understand*
Who was the person
who put this phone together *Do you mean call history* Was it wiped
at the factory or after How many hands touched it before mine *I don't*
know myself but I can find out I breathe in it's your air

7.

Motherboard left
your village you
miss her free
garden of plums
ravenala *a language*
of tightening
screws Do you type
your poems into it

lychee verbena bougainvillea
eucalyptus asbestosflower

at least three screens
a minute at least
twelve hours a day
spray the polish
onto the display

then wipe it dry
if you leave a trace
wipe it again

ten more nets go up

8.

The delegation comes to visit the factory the city government seeds the
clouds to cause rain it rains it clears the smog it leaves behind blue skies
from the ground silver iodide rockets fly up into the clouds which con-
dense which fall toward earth: raindrops. The air tastes harder. The light
sleeker. A frozen glass is rinsed in milk.

9.

Eighteen, your name meaning Walk Forward,

triple-bunked twelve to a room fences ten feet
tall on the roofs

bedsheets full of ash
dried gum in your fingerjoints and burrs
pricking behind your right shoulder

When you place it in its box

do you imagine me.

In the testing area the belt keeps running never stops
halfway through the sixteen-hour shift you recall
a corner of roof where one's torn be quick—

Eighteen your name meaning Walk Forward

Eighteen meaning unfree meaning

falling from a great height

10.

You are the one
who installs front
camera with proximity
sensor leaning
over the factory
assembly a shadow—
sensor gains awareness
six hands later in process

but you figure out how
to turn it on early *What if*
there were a faint summons
they could feel Sensor makes
a square around your
face and focuses *A pair*
of hands gently opening
a red lacquered door

11.

"On his rare days off Xu Lizhi likes to visit bookshops, lingering in the aisles. He frequents the factory library, and writes poems and reviews. He twice applies unsuccessfully for desk jobs—as a librarian at the factory and at his favorite Shenzhen bookstore Youyi. When a local journalist asks him about his future, he says: our lives will become better and better."

12.

I pick it up with my free hand, screenshot, Xu Lizhi, you're
standing on an overpass in Shenzhen, green plaid shirt,
your right hand holds your left forefinger,

you look older than

anyone your age—light traffic below and the railing's covered
in stickers, phone numbers...

I hold you in my hand you can't feel

proof of single status physical exam card

wastewater pours into the river, paystubs

scurrying like minnows *certificate of conformity* can't be both a boy and
a worker, choose one *They've trained me to refuse to skip*
work, refuse sick leave, refuse to be late, refuse to leave early—

Shenzhen once a fishing village children laugh dashing past
green lychee trees hulls heaped trash and scrub hills above
where now stands a bronze statue of Deng Xiaoping *a corridor*
made of nonfiction When it happened no one was there to see it

ten more nets go up

13.

You are the one
who changes air

filters in the manager's
office the yellow-

stained black-caked
filter a seine

that catches night in itself
all night

14.

I pick it up, type in your words *A screw plunges to the ground*
working overtime at night Another worker's falling asleep on the line
iron moon head jerking *Drops straight down with a faint sound that draws*
no one's attention just like before on the same kind
of night a person—

ten more
and grates on every window

15.

The boy breathing
next to you 120mm
tweezers turning thin

fingers the smallest
parts he moves by
hand always wears

gloves to touch it
until one morning he
picks it up and

types into it *My eyes are*
so tired they won't open

16.

I look at it. Locked. Is there space for a distress signal if you wanted
to leave one. I switch silencer off, hit home, it gives me
only one emergency call, no private numbers, but it can take
a picture. Will record whatever I do next. *I've heard there's a time*
difference with foreign countries, here it's daytime, there it's night—

Designed by Apple in California Assembled in China Model A1549
FCC ID BCG-E28I6AIC 579C-E28I6A IMEI 355790070868852

17.

I pick it up

forgive me

I pick it up

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Note: "To X" responds to the collection *Iron Moon: An Anthology of Chinese Worker Poetry*
(ed. Qin Xiaoyu, trans. Eleanor Goodman). It adapts language from Chinese and English me-
dia reports on the suicides at the Foxconn facilities where iPhones are assembled.