

Onion

Leung Ping-kwan

They say

What's so great about

an onion? Serves it right

to be criticized so very often lately

It's got homely clothes on, all right

but its name sounds suspiciously alien

and its background is no good, strip off one layer

there is yet another layer, with nothing much inside

nothing the people will call substance, mere formalist!

In the end they use some harsh words, and do away with this simpleton good-for-nothing. I, who spend all my time cooking, peel off one layer after another, different shapes, with no clear aims absent-mindedly I got my hands stained with with sourness, not wanting just to speak with metaphors. My eyes were a little itchy, not because of grand and sublime feelings. One layer on top of another, not all ordinary things are the same. Sometimes thin, sometimes thick, sometimes light, sometimes heavy, the slightest change slips out of habit models, daily life needs attention too. You and I indeed are different

The process of peeling has also touched me

That pungence that sweetness so sharp so

mixed. I look for new words to explain

it but they keep saying It's too easy

to bare yourself for all to see

They, in robes, sipping tea,

talk about refined trivia

solve lantern riddles

I go after other

Words

Translated by Martha Cheung

Timothy Kaiser

me.

cream like

can scoop ice

Lord, no one

rockyroad.

mint chip

butterscotch

strawberry

chocolate

vanilla

but

everything

most

at

good

not

am

I