

FROM THE GOOD EARTH

“The earth lay rich and dark, and fell apart lightly under the points of their hoes.

Sometimes they turned up a bit of brick, a splinter of wood. It was nothing. Some time, in some age, bodies of men and women had been buried there, houses had stood there, had fallen, and gone back into the earth. So would also their house, sometime, return into the earth, their bodies also. Each had his turn at this earth. They worked on, moving together--together--producing the fruit of this earth--speechless in their movement together.”

from *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck  
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duration: c. 4:15

Keeping in mind that Pearl Buck spent much of her life in China, I have tried to enhance her wonderfully evocative text by employing the traditional Chinese pentatonic scale, avoiding Western-type harmonies in favor of long melodic lines to convey the vastness of that country, and using the piano to imitate the sounds of the ch'in (Chinese zither) and large gongs.