Opening a Minor Genre of Resistance in Reform China:  
Scream, Dream, and Transgression in a Workplace

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A scream pitched itself through the darkness of the night. It came, as usual, in the last hours of night, at about four. Yan had had that same nightmare, and she again fell to shrieking. I was awakened by the ghostlike voice, to find it passing away, and the deep silence of the night reigned once again.

Yan was a dagongmei (working daughter) who worked in an electronics company owned by Hong Kong capitalists in the Special Economic Zone of Shenzhen, China, where I also stayed as an assembly line worker from November 1995 to April 1996. The firm we worked for was Meteor Electronic Company Ltd., also known as “the Meteor”; its workforce ranged from 500 to 550 during my stay. Initially there to study the transformation of the working lives and identities of Chinese women in light of China’s attempt to incorporate its socialist system into the global economy in the Reform Era, I was brought to the genre of bodily politics and transgression when, at the final stage of my fieldwork, I unexpectedly encountered the

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