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*Thousands of Taiwanese protested the killing
of an old street peddler by a Kuomintang soldier.
Protesters were killed by troops from China.*

The school day ended early
and it pleased my father,

how sleekly the sky ran across
his skin. His mother was rolling

out dough at home. Sparrows,
splendor, steam out of windows

from nearly risen buns, or was it
flame feathering out of windows,

blood washed up on streets or on
faces on bodies that ran through

streets, making men beautifully red,
running towards home, towards

the smell of boiling cabbage?
There were hundreds of bodies, no,

thousands. It had started with an
old lady selling cigarettes on

Ji Long Road. She wouldn't bargain,
or she wouldn't turn her money over,

or she spat on his uniform, or they
were smuggled cigarettes. Yes,

there was blood. Yes, he struck her
down with a revolver butt, as if

one body could be beaten in isolation . . .