

Finding Solace

Walking across the Brooklyn bridge I think how
solace drifts through air that rises off the East river

lifting reflections of light into the faces
of those who walk beside me, so that all of us together

move as one luminous thought wondering
how we came to be sharing company in this country,

this city, this bridge? My mind slips into the space great heights offer.
I remember a bus ride from Oaxaca where I shared seats

with a mother mourning a lost daughter, yet still able to find solace
in cradled chickens and goats with angel eyes,

or the day I climbed the 180 steps to the monk's mountain house
to sit beneath prayer flags filled with Tibet's morning light.

I think of the immigrant's bowl passed from my father's hands
to mine, as though the memory of fingers kneading dough

could impart the touch I was searching for on this bridge,
stretching high above a city I am learning to love.

I walk, searching for that one place the heart can take refuge in,
suspended between heaven and earth, wandering like the rivers

and mountains poet, Hsieh Ling-yun, in a place beyond knowing.
I imagine Tibetan prayer flags stretching

one side of this bridge to the other, spanning the green water
with a hundred offerings of solace

to all those who walk beneath them.

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