

“This Is The Sky That I See”

Under that softly lit pink sky that day in Rennes
The bus broke down as the city began to wake
And I was late for school with still a mile to go

Beneath the faint sky, I walked with the rising sun
And as the sky began to turn blue and clouds rose
I suddenly wondered if the sky I saw here
Was the same sky *my* city would see very soon

In this new brand home I found myself stranded in
The sky was still the same and I was still the same
Mostly, at least: everyone changes with the sky

Yet this is the sky that I see: a new morning
And I wondered if maybe I should just head home

Around the same season as this glowing pink sky
I was not very strong but I believed I was
I left my family, my friends, and my city
At sixteen years old to rediscover myself

What is there to rediscover about sixteen?
The funny thing is, if I'd known what I would find,
What I would discover, I would have stayed at home
But as I said, I was young, weaker than I knew

Still, I cannot take all the credit from myself
I will admit that I did a pretty cool thing
Perhaps I wanted to simultaneously
Connect and separate myself from my parents

My mom immigrated many times in her life
First, Japan to England, following her father

Then back to Japan and then to San Francisco
My mom has not been back to Japan ever since

My father, on the other hand, was all alone
All the way to Montreal, to study music
He rented an upstairs room in the apartment
Of an Egyptian family who loved him so

I heard their stories; my mom bullied for her words
My father, all alone for thanksgiving dinner
But the two of them both found solace in music
And they urged me to do the same, with something else

Find something, they told me, that will keep you afloat
Anything to bind you to the embrace of life
Spoken word may get you into schools and classes
But art will bring you home and you will find solace

Beneath a gray-blue sky, I approached the dance school
But they turned me away. I did not have the words
To tell them that I had not found my solace yet

I didn't dance at all when I was sixteen years old.
But sometimes, in my host family's home, I would
Dance by myself in the living room, pretending
That I was once more onstage, dancing, me again

In the house where we lived, the living room had a
Sliding glass door open for all to look into.
If someone happened to look in at that instance,
They would have seen a girl slow dancing by herself

But despite my lack of dancing, Rennes was lovely
Every morning, the windows would fog up with dew
The sky would be ablaze with abundant color
This sky carried me all over, even back home.

Sometimes I cry thinking about the girl I left
The sixteen year old me, still sitting in that room
Staring out the window at the burgeoning sky

But the sky I see now is different from then

Sometimes, I still find myself picturing that day
The morning the bus broke down and I walked to school
The way the sunlight began to peak through the trees
Took my breath away and I opted to stand there,
Breathing in that clean, crisp air for just a moment

Thinking to myself, *This is the sky that I see*