

## *T'AI CHI STILLNESS*

*I grind a walnut into the bamboo floor and stand waiting to move,  
my right hand hipside,  
Windows taller than myself let light in from the south, brushing  
the room's corner,  
Where an unknown tree protects us with green leaves like a giant's  
own fig leaf bouquet.  
Maybe it is too tall for its vase? I fear it may topple one day.*

*But, maybe this vase is larger than the water jugs turned wine  
casks that Jesus prayed over at Canaan. I continue.*

*No breeze inside, a small molecule of temple incense less assertive  
than sandalwood comes from somewhere into my breath,  
And I deepen, sinking my hips, lunging to bow stance.*

*I halt in the disunity between my breath and my hips. I divert and  
move inward to my palms and feel the energy, stretching, pulsing,  
prickling my skin. I try again.*

*An anxious, hesitant step. Will I understand dragon fire and  
gentle fire in this lifetime? Rainier begs me to leave these questions  
unanswered, so that one day I might live into them.*

*Heat rises to Lao Gong.  
Light circulates and sinks to Dan Tien.*

*A white heron spreads its wings in surrender of its grace and  
beauty.*

*Circles of chi and circulations of breath bring stillness and peace as  
if on the river's edge.*

*In this moment, the heron, the river and I are one.*

*-Rufina C. Garay  
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