

Nomad possessions

The first gardens must have been long,
broadcast from discarded seeds along circle treks.
So, maybe ha-ha is the oldest garden name.
When you doubled back and saw the corn had followed you,
at a discreet distance, 'A ha!', you said.

If you walk the long garden, you haul everything you own.
You carry on your shoulders what doesn't grow shoulders,
so better to herd than hoard.
Better to store with quick assonance, to vault with oral verve
and keep head counts in campfire stories,
rather than enrol in scroll and scroll of earthly troves
your battered treasured things:

the trust of cattle
that follow or maybe lead
not knowing boundaries
only following beaten tracks,
choreographed as water thrives

the pattern of a carpet
that exists foremost in potential
a child could carry
your computers in the stars
making you look up not down
at properties too large to license

languages long lost and gained
different songs with different steps

along highways without signs.

Where towers are casting shadows in the circling sun,
as rings of repugnance round fearful hoards,
you are strangers outside the walls,
but you can always carry strangers
(Rohingya mother, grandma Cantonese)
whom you may never know
and grow where you were never planted.

We can forage strangers broadcast in ourselves
(we anger our old gods after all,
who abide in the stories of corn,
when we are not kind to strangers).

The last gardens on Earth will be long.