



Linda Pastan

An Orient of the Imagination

What have I come so far to see?
my grandson in his cell-like room
teaching English to Tokyo businessmen
on break, or this moss garden,
velvety green upon green?
Or is it the stealth of these cherry trees
in winter, preparing to take over –
a dictatorship of blossom all April long?

Am I still in thrall to childhood,
to those books
with their inky illustrations –
rickshaws, geishas, camellias –
to that round blue globe
that sat on my desk
like a colorful beach ball,
so easy to spin? I am trying

to escape all the old expectations,
to find a landscape of temple bells
and rivers of raked gravel, of simple
decisions – hot sake or chilled? –
as I ride these quicksilver rails,
packing and repacking,
longing for a place
far beyond the realm of travel.

Thank you for reading! Find more at www.theharlequin.org.