

PORTAL: PRAGUE (*Praha*)

That night we drank dark beer
at L'vi Dur
then listened to the Czech orchestra
gallop us over mountains,
as if we'd entered Dvorak's New World
a thousand years
from the velvet chairs in
that mirrored room.

And at the Kafka Café
students argued politics,
like we always did at supper and
I remembered Kafka's letter
to his father,
how he made peace,
*to make living and dying
a little easier.*

The next day on the Charles Bridge
a woman with solid hands
sold me a painted map,
and I crossed the Vltava
to Mala Strana
again and again,
as if walking through
that city of spires
and up Nerudova,
I could walk my life
into something new.

I placed one foot
before the other
crossing rivers
crossing bridges
turning days into years
I travelled solo,
forgiveness settling
on my shoulders, finally,
and learning
much later
that **PRAHA**
meant threshold.