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From Here to There

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Alpana Sharma

From Here to There

It's not across
the black waters
but over specks
of land and sea
dissolving borders
flying through an endless dawn
that we arrive
the journey ensuring
our here became there

*where the smell-taste of parched soil newly rained on
was intoxicating but gritty*

My mother put
me on a plane
wrenching me
from everything familiar
she could not have known
that living so easy
would prove so hard
one world dead
the other still born

*the sun setting over our Karva Chauth prayers turned us
golden*

Whose hollow foster promise
when stripped down
amounted to
—admit it—
a *Time* magazine photo
of JFK framed
on the wall
of my mother's childhood home
in Gujarat

*but Babaji's nails, bones, and teeth arrived intact
in Hardwar inside Jiji's handkerchief*