

Time at Teotihuacán

Ysabel de la Rosa

No other set of stairs feels right
now that my feet have scaled those ancient
ones, set at an angle my knees have
never known. There the diagonal and
the straight are one: they lead
you to—I can't tell you where.

Ascent takes strength of
lung and muscle. Descent
demands balance, concentration,
pensive placement of the sole,
the rhythm of it all relies on—
dies without—thought.

None of it casual, not one inch of it without reason,
all this stone-on-stone, this symmetry born before the
measurements I use were known.

These are teaching stairs,
 blood red
 charcoal dark
 earth brown.

Their deep silence will change you
should you listen.

And from then on,
the stairs you take—
from subway
 to busstop, living room
 to bedroom,
 classroom to auditorium,
 boardroom to
 office—all those stairs,
they, too, will never feel the same
to you
once you
 climb through

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