

East Asian Studies

It began as digression,
a way to patch something broken.

Then I was hurtling toward fluency
or another failed inquiry

at the door to a region.
After half a dozen seasons,

completion seemed possible,
but I took it all as preamble

to something ill-defined,
a life of the mind

without plans for the body.
I had no practicalities

nor reasoned explanations
for having come to this station.

I had followed a feeling,
a penchant for being – or believing

in being – in two places at once.
Always, I had been in only one.