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Qigong Dancer

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Qigong Dancer

She took off her dusty brown boots—
boots, she said, that had travelled
for miles along hiking trails
following bird songs, wildlife tracks
Her bare feet, not ballet shoes
or all-star basketball sneakers
stepped like bird feet
each toe humble and free
She taught us eight postures:
earth, heaven, fire, wind
lightning, lake, mountain, water
her tall, weightless form
flowing soundlessly as a heron
We formed a circle and walked clockwise
practicing the postures
Then she told us to disperse outside
and get intimate with some aspect of nature
performing the postures while walking
I circled a tree, treading lightly as I could
on the moss, trying to step inside of nature
away from the heavy rubber feet
wheeling along the nearby highway:
earth, heaven, fire, wind
lightning, lake, mountain, water
human dancer

ANDREA NICKI is the author of two books of poetry, *Welcoming* (Inanna Press, 2009) and *Noble Orphan* (Demeter Press, 2014). She is currently completing a third collection.