Borders

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Drawn in ink or blood, they unspool from history to split mountains and valleys, meander in rivers that twist and turn, dragging their banks to new configurations, adding to, subtracting from, this dominion or that. Invisible, except when a fence or wall defines them, ramparts that open only through drawbridge or gate guarded by sirens and guns. Those you can step across are silent. The same weeds grow on either side. Perhaps a sign announces some new territory, but the soil does not change its allegiance: clay or silt, loam or dust. The name of the tree that straddles a border may change from one language to another, but its roots are anchored in the same earth

and draw up water that travels without passport or visa.

Still, coastal nations cast their nets three miles into the ocean's tides and storms, and even the sky is bound with invisible lines dividing yours from mine.