

Two Poems by Linda Park

#1

Can I walk out to the center of my courtyard,  
squat on the ground, and cry my heart out?

Would neighbors flutter and gather  
to coo my rawness as they ooze out?

Would butterflies, birds, chipmunks, and ducks  
peek and quack at the big mammals' commotion?

Everyone cracks silly laughs as  
a Chinese boy, with his curious face, says *zenmele*?

Would our eyes meet one another for the first time  
and say hello, shedding crumbs of shyness?

#2

My body is floating  
that's how it feels  
We are all floating  
that's how it looks

Nothing weighs us down  
No one pulls us down  
No shackles around our ankles  
No baggage on our chests

How did that happen?  
We simply said "No."  
to those who lunge over and try to topple us.  
We shook our heads, and said "Not on us."

We float with bouncing feet  
over the gleaming grassy field.

There must be something to it.  
You can't live without suffering.  
Of course, there is.  
We live in human bodies  
that ail and decay.

But all is done for those who are ill.  
We hold nothing back  
'cause why would we?