

Cross that Line

by Naomi Shihab Nye

Paul Robeson stood
on the northern border
of the USA
and sang into Canada
where a vast audience
sat on folding chairs
waiting to hear him.

He sang into Canada.
His voice left the USA
when his body was
not allowed to cross
that line.

Remind us again,
brave friend.
What countries may we
sing into?
What lines should we all
be crossing?
What songs travel toward us
from far away
to deepen our days?

From You & Yours (BOA Editions, 2005)