

The Kite

BY JUDITH BEVERIDGE

Today I watched a boy fly his kite.
It didn't crackle in the wind – but
gave out a barely perceptible hum.

At a certain height, I'd swear I heard
it sing. He could make it climb in
any wind; could crank those angles up,

make it veer with the precision of
an insect targeting a sting; then he'd
let it roil in rapturous finesse, a tiny

bird in mid-air courtship. When
lightning cracked across the cliff –
(like quick pale flicks of yak-hair

fly-whisks) – he stayed steady. For
so long he kept his arms up, as if
he knew he'd hoist that kite enough.

I asked if it was made of special silk,
if he used some particular string –
and what he'd heard while holding it.

He looked at me from a distance,
then asked about my alms bowl,
my robes, and *about that for which*

a monk lives. It was then I saw
I could tell him nothing in the cohort
wind, that didn't sound illusory.