

I am far enough out on this high wire—
I have to make some decision: forward or back.
Who said, “Not to decide is to decide.”?
Clever, that.

Why, when I am so impressed with all without
Is there a creeping, crying fear within?
What is there left to fear in turning Jew?
I comfort my fear, hold it close, that it might speak.

Is it a fear of not being sure enough, not being accepted,
Not being good? All these are answered! Still,
The heart is not a listener to the head.
Unchanged, this panting fear of mine lies mute.

How can I end with uplift?
It's cold and dark where I pursue my fear,
Not warm and light like in the rabbi's study.
That I pursue—is that enough?

By Ariel Cohen