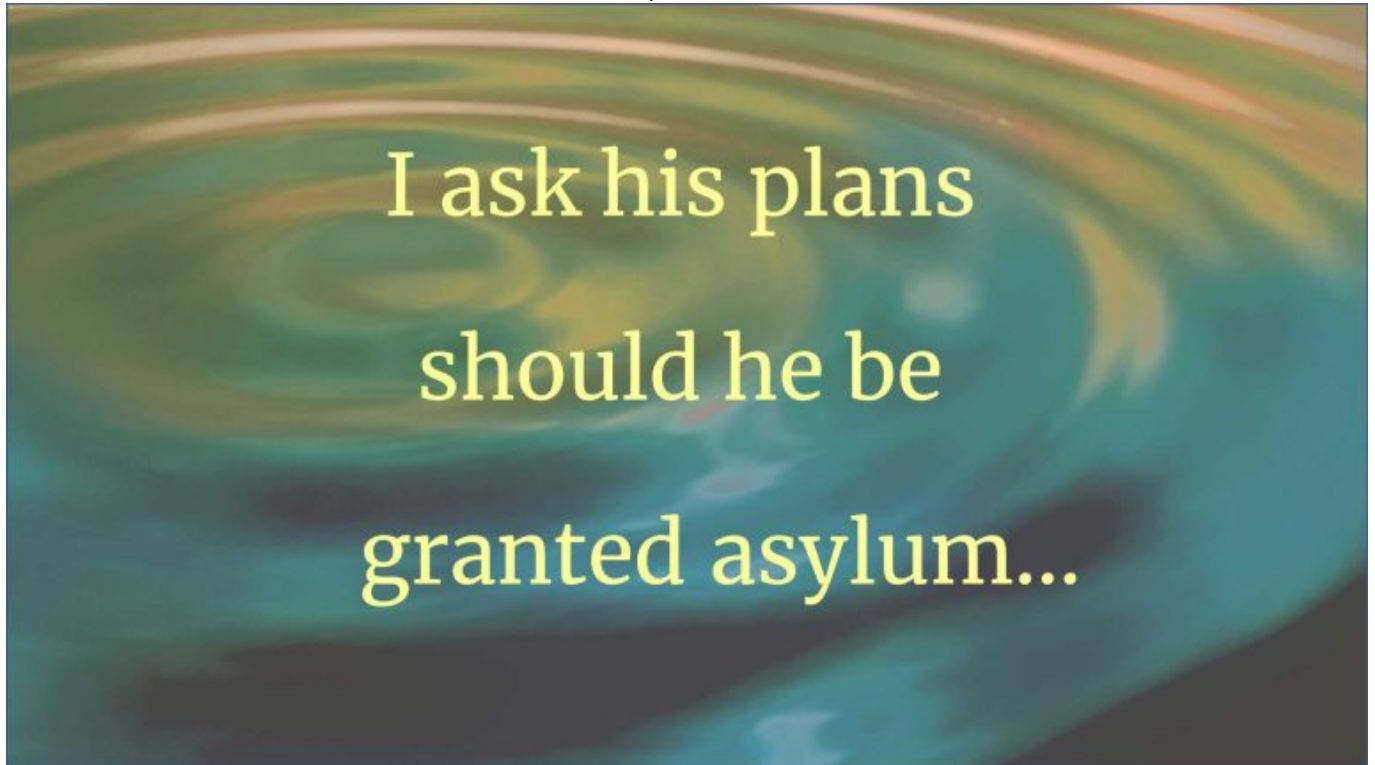


Common Cause

Category: Poems

written by Kendra Fleagle Gorlitsky | November 21, 2025



Sitting before me
I measure his scars and record the beatings
He is broken

Not just his teeth and back, his will is shattered
I ask his plans should he be granted asylum
He has none

My notes reveal he was once an accomplished chef in a fine restaurant
Before his forced exile
I reveal my favorite activity: preparing a feast for friends and family

Asked his menu, he responds: You would not be familiar with dishes I served
I press on, You have a gift—to delight people with your cooking
You can do that still, for acquaintances and strangers...when you recover

When you do, please share with me your secret spices
For a brief moment, raising his head
he offers a tentative nod