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POETRY/FICTION

Poems

DIVING AGAIN

For Margaret Page

The sleek body, naked but for a hint of cloth,
perfectly aligned (or else: the pain),
mind attuned—not to death,
oh, no, not to death, but to form,
yes form, form and that glistening sheet stretched taught below.
And don't forget the distance, the angle, the speed–
a splendid bit of mathematics.
Then crack! And it's all inward now,
inward and silent as the grave.
Down, down, down, forever down,
until a force, a force takes over
and up the diver comes,
up the diver comes and shakes with joy.
Lord, there's nothing like it!
Nothing like going down to come up,
in to get out.

And nothing like the healing, warming sun
to dry up the darkness until it calls again.

—Chaplain Rita Sherman

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