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Ballet Is Cheaper Than Therapy

I dream.
I dream my brother
in restless movements
rippling shadows
thick dark colors
purples and blues
stern words
shouts
none recalled but one:
“Ballet lessons are cheaper than therapy.”

I dream.
I dream of dancing
childhood pliés at the bar,
my cruel reflection
whispering what’s to come.
Swirls and twirls across the floor,
memories of dear Elaine
my vibrant blonde playmate
destined to dance
but not to dance
destined to audition
in London
Paris
Moscow
New York and L.A.
everywhere facing rejection
of her appearance
despite her skill.

I faced other sorrows.
My mother's fears for my oversized heart
took away
my twirls and swirls
my tap shoes
my gym shoes
my bat and ball.
Forced to lie in the back seat
while others romped in Mount Evans' snow,
I dreamed of dance.

Once grown,
learning again to dance,
the lumbering amazon
I had become
learned
she could not be lifted
by dancing jocks.

But still I dream.
I dream
twirls and swirls
my inner child
flying across the stage
a dizzying series of turns
arms and legs
dancing
dancing
dancing
wondering what I'd become
if my body could dance
the way my mind
can dream.

— May Cotton
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