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On Belay

David Evans

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On Belay

DAVID EVANS

Three feet wide the ledge and above
 One, bound to me by a thousand deaths,
 Catclaws upon his universe. Balanced,
 Caught with nails, outcrosses Self
 Around the corners, clings firm,
 And moves from night.

Below,

A rotting silence; and beyond,
 Pale haze.

A pause. The rope
 Swings slack, grows taut again
 And through my hands I feel once more
 His upward surge. No motion now
 Not guarded by my loins
 (God grant them fast)
 And the long cord spinning out
 all time.

