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Stages

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She is a dancer.
Pink satin-clad feet are her storytellers.
The spotlight and wooden floor beckon her solo performance.
Her heart pounds as she takes center stage.
Her soul craves the kinship between movement and music,
pain and pleasure,
feet and floor,
artist and audience.

She is a dancer.
Though her limbs are less limber,
her inner grace, passion, and desire still move
to the symphonic voice in her head.
She still sees herself dancing, from a distance now,
like a child watches the ballerina twirl inside a jewel box.

She is a dancer.
She exchanges the painful hours
of toes banging en pointe
for endless days
of fingers tapping out words.
The desk light and white space beg a new solo performance,
for another unseen audience.
She chooses metaphors over movement.
She gives up the dancer's excitement at the curtain call
for the writer's more permanent thrill
after she dances across the printed page.

She is a dancer. She takes to the stage. For she has a story to tell.

FIRE LIKE SILK

Louisa Parzyk

Five-years-old I reached
for the stove burner flame.
A gorgeous orange silk
rippling under a pot
of water roiling for tea.
I stroked the fire and she
licked my finger, timid
and wavering.
I coaxed her off the stove
with matchsticks and Dad's
Marlboros. I took the flame and she
warmed my pocket change.
That autumn the leaves of her
own coloring curled black