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Oozing

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Suddenly, a ladder, woven expertly and generously in rope, dangles from the sky. A clear, definitive line wraps around the top of the ladder, manifesting an opening to this hole I've fallen in. A circle dug into the earth which lies now just within reach. Could it be? I can escape at last?

As light ebbs
the distance,
me tricks,
flashes of a
But who
For the first
My legs
strength to
the shivers
from me like
But then my
his warmth.
seek his eyes.
simpler, he
for me to go.
know he can't



and flows in
my eyes play
teasing quick
silhouette.
could that be?
time, I stand.
display the
jet me away;
of pain depart
fallen chains.
hand recalls
And I turn to
With a pained
knows it's time
But we both
come with me.
desperately—I
comforting,
my left hand
practical, safe,

Oozing
Photography
Martin Johnson

Courageously—
keep hold of his
warm hand as
rests upon the
but thorny, rope. What could I choose? Life? Or sadness beside his comfort? Getting up, he pushes me forward, cradling my hand between his, cherishing the last of our interactions. Closer and closer still, he inches me, his mellifluous warmth straining my heart and clenching my throat—my knowing all too well how dearly I'll miss it. Suddenly, the rope is between my two hands, swaying quietly in the breeze. A burst of fresh air—a beautiful marvel of the outside world—greets me, beckoning me closer. Calling me to ascend, for it's my time to shine. Hot tears pour from my face, scalding my skin. His arms wrap around me breathlessly; a gentle nudge of his head rests upon me for the last time. And, with a plaintive whisper backed by love and confidence, he sends me off.

“Go now, my flower. The world is waiting for you.”