

ERIC NELSON

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ENGLISH

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## VARIATIONS ON A DREAM

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The sun hangs like a flaming orange  
from the blue, domed ceiling of this dream.  
My mother and I —  
invited guests at a rich man's home,  
a man I'd never seen, but always known.  
They are standing on the green  
by the lake — his white seaplane bobs offshore.  
I'm atop a diving board,  
wet, warm, and feeling blessed,  
gazing into a powder blue reflection  
of faces from the past.  
Mother and the rich man laugh and wave at me,  
I smile and perform a jackknife for them, perfectly.

Later,  
we enter the house and dine at a table  
set with white linen and scintillant crystal.

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Now, the seaplane has flown.  
The dome is grey.  
The sun is gone.  
Fog blankets the lake.  
No one is home.  
I materialize from the mist  
at the edge of the property line  
and stand atop the diving board.  
Wet and shivering, arms crossed,  
my hands clutch my shoulders.  
I want to plumb it,  
but the pool is covered;  
and I must climb down from the board  
and peel back the tarp  
in order to dive into the clouds.

Later,  
I must break into the house  
to warm my naked self.