

## The gravity of the matter

*Peter Van Zante*

"It's a matter of introspection," he said,  
words filled with the gravity of an eight-story rooftop.  
His eyes lowered and his right foot,  
like the fourth beat of a boxed-in waltz,  
backstepped over the edge. Eighty feet later,  
his other foot caught up.

When the police arrived  
they found little to say,  
and it was strange that he who had fallen  
needed eight stories to end his own.  
They shook their heads,  
vertigo ringing in their ears.

When the undertaker overtook the matter  
of washing away evidence of his fall,  
little mattered beside an outward appearance of calm.  
So the quiet vault was sealed six feet deeper,  
his body resting six feet lighter,  
one story closer to gravity.

He left little for discussion  
when his left foot followed the rest  
in the short drop to the bottom,  
only mouths closed like caskets  
and the echo of a friend  
backing away.