

On Being a Dancer

Having never moved like this before,
I can't say whether
I'll die now or in two minutes.

You corral the pain and channel it into
A stretch of the leg that
Strains calf and thigh and arch muscles
But which is lovelier Than
For a second, at least.

I? Why did you sign me on to this
And put me in a world where I learn
To take my rib cage and
Turn it inside out,
Look at it from underneath,
And pull my fingertips closer
To the sticky security of the floor?
I die now or in two minutes;
I feel it coming on;
You have introduced me to numbness
(in the hands)
And the taste of alcohol
In the back of my throat.
All of what you've made me do is
Dread and lead on my legs and brain

Until the solitary moment-
Captured in my mind like a strobe,
When
You caught me in the middle, somewhat elevated.