

Pieces of Advice for a Dancing Girl

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4 Pieces of Advice for a Dancing Girl

Dance as if no one
Is looking at you,
Be a Picasso lifting from the body's canvass
Shoulders and hands.
Let the fire-brush blacken
Charcoal burning in the eyes.
And remember that from the moment of your birth, I'm ripping out
Tiles burning beneath your feet.

A Fifth Piece of Advice for a Dancing Girl

See the girls in the dancing studio
Arranged like lines in an epic poem
About sugar-cane groves.
Their heads straighten along furrows
Of translucent air
Where toes are the body's simple plough.
I'm writing these lines with a hand
Extending like a bird's wing.
Tomorrow you shall dance them with a foot
That'll sow a tear and reap a song.

A Sixth Piece of Advice to a Dancing Girl

When you're unwinding threads of your foot
From the body's spool
And you keep your eyes pin-sharp,
Don't forget dance is a needle
With which God has sewn the foamy crest
On the waves' heads, the chattering teeth
Of those diving into water, and the flags of luxury liners
That sail from the shoulder's shores towards the tips of fingers,
With which I pack the farewell luggage
Of your childhood

Pointe shoes

From the moment ballet lights up in you
Pink ribbons thread up
Your ankles.
And you
Erect
A body
Like a boom lift
At the end of which stands the one who changes
Burnt-out bulbs in the belly
Of street lamps.
Beneath the cast-off light
I water with a glance
The flowers of electricity that sprout
From the tar-face of
Asphalt.

Swan Lake. A Seventh Piece of Advice to a Dancing Girl

Make it so that a tear from the swan's cheek
Becomes a cornerstone
For the Ocean of Joy.
There
I shall learn to swim.

Knees. An Eighth Piece of Advice for a Dancing Girl

For seven months every player dribbles
Nearly 80 games. His weight could reach 290 pounds,
And when he lands badly on the court, the knees
Shed tears.
The knee's an engine. It's the will's pivot lifting up spine.
A turnaround will glorify
The jump
For whoever came to see
Ballet
On the scoreboard.
And there are knees sneaky under a dress dancing the flamenco,
Knees very obedient in tango,
Knees born for the caress of salsa,
And there are knees that are yours.
I remember the day you started crawling.
We laid your knees on the pool table,
And the balls that rolled around started losing color.
You didn't let go. When you tried to stand up, you fell down with that beauty
Of a one-hand
Clap.

Since then, about the knees, I'm less worried.