

Step

Deelia Sherman

Moccasins paw the ground so delicate and intentional,
hit quick and rhythmic, like antigravity:
step

stepstep

step,

like the bodies above follow pre-mapped lines, smooth and complete.
Each muscle and feather move in total alliance,
total harmony with the physical realm,
flow from within like a life-giving spring.

I want to run my hands over their shining fabric, their soft fur,
just out of reach, ethereal on the coliseum floor like angels.
I wait for passing eyes to see my longing, try to telepathically shout:
Put me on that floor, Put me in that dress.

Bright spinning glitter, and ribbons, and bones
shine yellow

greenpurple

blue,

demand attention, trace stars, imprint afterimages.
Indelible on the land,
under the big American flag,
waving their own vibrant colors.

Metal cones, bells, footsteps build rolling sound. It might be raining.
I wash myself in auditory sand, salivate at the strong pulsing of its drum.

I think they might be dancing for those who cannot.
I don't think I understand the weight of their task—
of carracks

and gunpowder germs
and metal ruler
and the joy. The outstanding joy of their spins,
 arms outstretched to carry the weight of the entire evil world,
 to match every beat heartbeat—perfect.
Maybe I'll grow up to be like them.

I copy their steps in my snow boots, awkward and small,
flooded with raindrops and sparkling pride
 for something beautiful, that I'm not sure is my own.