

THE LAST BALLET CLASS



FRANCINE RUBIN

THE LAST BALLET CLASS

is in a green field under blooming supercell clouds, dancers arching, desperately sweeping against grass and warm pressureless air. Clouds blossom like poison flowers. As the storm's movements expand, dancers swirl in sky.

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is underwater, dancers' limbs negotiating density, legs pressing against the weight of water. Each jump suspends a moment longer, human mass encumbered by less gravity, waves rocking torsos, bodies succumbing to the ocean's force.

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is on ice, dancers spinning, muscles fighting
frigidity, bodies cloaked by layers of cloth and wool
muffling each movement. Inexorable rime, unbending
compositions. Feet tread carefully, avoiding
the unforgiving ice, the crack.

THE LAST BALLET CLASS

is in space, Earth a haunting memory, arms and legs
wafting slowly, perpetually in air,
no ground to curtail jumps. Slow dancing
governs, allegro slackened by the absence of air.
The emptiest black against bodies, a sun
lights each movement.

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is on WASP-12b, the planet raining molten sapphires,
each *plié* and *tendu* shimmering blue, bodies
glowing ecstatically in one last burst of life.

THE LAST BALLET CLASS

is in darkness, the sun a recollection, bodies moving without audience and from internal memory, each dancer blindly replicating *plié* and *tendu*, no mirror or teacher's eye for reflection.

Dancers search for other dancers with hands grasping hands, waists, and legs – bodies reading the space and responding to each verberation.

THE LAST BALLET CLASS

is on Mars, leaps hanging in thin air filled
with carbon dioxide, landing in arid canyon,
redness shading skin and sky. Suited limbs
lunge and dart, a moving piece of modern art,
lungs sucking oxygen, racing against time.