March 12, 2013

Dance Marathon, 1931

Meg Johnson, University of Akron
POEM | by Meg Johnson

Dance Marathon, 1931

Someone is combing my hair.  
My eyes blink and blink. A lady  
sponges my face. Too dangerous  
to close eyes all the way. Keep  
moving.

Crowds come and go. Jackets  
and chatter. I don’t notice them  
very much anymore.

Yesterday (yesterday?) a woman  
had a tooth pulled on the dance floor.  
No anesthesia. Keep dancing.

When he gets too heavy in my arms  
I shake him. Sometimes he shakes  
me, shakes me awake.

Bottoms of my stockings are bloody.  
Dried blood and fresh blood. Reds  
and browns.

The cots are behind the curtains.  
Nurses in white. Someone died.

Could they find me here?  
L... Oh...

Eggs and toast. Eggs and toast.  