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Kokyu-Dosa

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Kokyu-Dosa

PATRICIA CLARK

On the padded canvas floor
we sit facing each other,
knees together, matching
our breaths. If done correctly,
he'll extend his arms as though
I'm not even here, and we'll end up
changed, in a different posture.
Sensei tells us we're learning
harmony. My heart fills
with desire. When did this man's
wrists become so beautiful?
I watch his throat through half-
closed eyes. I lie on my back,
then. He kneels in seiza
beside me, exhaling and pushing
down as I push up. As intimate
as a kiss, his weight on my hands
makes me feel, suddenly,
tender. Now we exchange places.
He lets me move him, resisting
just enough. I'm stronger
than ever before, as though grief
has knitted me back whole.
Can I trust this again, my weight
on his hands? I'm close enough
to feel his heartbeat. He holds me
up, steadily, and I hear our breath
come out slowly, together, the dojo
dark around us, white walls gleaming.