Gymnastics Stephanie

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element group requirements dismount cartwheel practice practice practice practice

I am in at least two sorts of race with my body, where “with” means both “riding in and by means of” and “against, viewing it as a competitor”: what can I get myself to learn to do and to do as soon as possible in the competitive moment or minute or day or month or calendar year before its changes take the willingness or the supposedly fearless patience (whatever that means) or the ability away

practice practice practice practice practice don’t look at me practice head over head over heels over head over heels and practice practice practice practice practice now pretty means pretty hard or pretty is as pretty does

is practice practice practice practice too pretty too difficult now practice do it again now practice practice practice practice practice practice do it again a backward somersault while moving forward practice practice practice practice

whether any of the people watching me who have not done the things I do know what I can do or what I have been trying to do or how hard it can be or how easy it seemed before I knew what I was doing not that I know what I am doing now

practice practice practice practice practice practice practice almost lost it practice practice practice beyond the interminable practice practice might be the effortless practice practice practice or apparently effortless practice practice practice or something like joy
only my peers understand me (if they do) maybe I have no peers

do not do any of these things for me do them for yourself
practice do them for me while smiling or practice practice
you may as well not do them at all

to prepare for years to concentrate for the entirety of a life
(short as it seems to adults) to see
eternity as a warm-up and a walk-through

for a minute and a half in which to be and to show whatever you are

over and steady two hurtles flic-flac this is what you had practiced practice practice practice practice
practice practice two folds one more

to have become someone who has to be only what you show the world

that’s what you are so soon it will be what you were

practice practice practice practice practice

the rotation the rounded arc the stick that casual fans and families know

the return from infinite vertical space into human time

what is amazing to amateurs has to become second nature no marvel a stopwatch to me

over and steady two hurtles flic-flac this is what you had practiced practice practice practice practice
practice practice two folds one more
there used to always be a balance beam in my dreams
and the sensation of turning over and over
the pale blue and all too exciting wish never to land
to have become someone who has to be
only what you show the world
that’s what you are so soon it will be what you were