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## Tap Shoe Memento Mori

Rachel Beneway  
*SUNY Fredonia*

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RACHEL BENEWAY

# Tap Shoe Memento Mori

*A vision of Carol Falkowitz, distinguished tap dancer  
and colorful grandmother.*

Violent slaps ring  
off the dining room table's  
finished mahogany.

She matches the metal licks  
to the bold  
in her hips,  
and from it a rhythmic clink resurrects  
into tune. Eyes sewn  
shut; she lets the silver pulse  
groove her.  
Her cracked skin  
and kinked frame feeling  
for the days of stages and loud light—  
an audience of hazy grins  
and grabby eyes watch her  
Cincinnati,  
Cincinnati  
ball-change.  
Then, from the crimson-rimmed  
hollow that is her mouth,

they'll see, atop  
her bubblegummed-tongue, rests  
a knotted cherry stem.

Nodding in acceptance  
of her lost dew, a  
dead peachiness,

she'll insist:

*When I croak—  
bury me with nothing but  
metal slabs on my feet and a  
teacup full of cherries*