



Gabriella M. Belfiglio

Live Model

1.
first glimpse
 all I see is navel
growing out of arm
2.
go for realism—you can get surreal later

3.
color, complementary
purple and yellow or
blue with orange
 (think of the open fold of butterfly wings—
 think sliced cherry
 tomatoes, tinned with
 home-grown basil leaves

4.
her breathing:
a cloud stuck in sky
invisible air expelled
 pushing the V of rib
 into stomach

5.
only the shield of face
that mask we carry
I will submit this body

6.
the dark crumbs of freckles
 on the soft shell of skin

7.
sharp tiny lines of red, faded scars—
 one below her clavicle: shape
 of crescent moon

8.
chiseled pink of toenails

9.
metal earring
a reflection of light
hanging from supple lobe

10.
and nipples—those delicious determined circles
completely their own

11.
behind me, the scraping of color against canvas
body taking shape in buttercup yellow

against cream
at her knee, a touch of brown
blended by finger

with one straight blaze of hand comes
a line of purple—
my eyes cannot leave its sharp pull
at the edge

12.
on my left it is all shin and thigh
round like a giant swallow

on my right, defiance
a chest full of it
her body falls
into a well of twilight shadows
and like changing a single word
in a poem, one smudge of charcoal
brings her alive—

13.
I can almost see her breathing
on the page

14.
across the room I see her neck
tension frozen
stretching toward a head
it never reaches

15.
artist, for one day
can I claim your hand
make your genius mine—
in exchange, I will let you peer inside,
give you words off my tongue.

Gabriella M. Belfiglio is an artist and teacher as well as poet. Her work has appeared in *The Dream Catcher's Song*, *Avanti Popolo*, *The Centrifugal Eye*, *The Potomac Review* and elsewhere. Her writing also appears in the award-winning anthology *Poetic Voices Without Borders*.

Photo from Models on Pinterest