

**Juliet, I Am Not**  
**by Penney Knightly**  
*Poetry*

The curtain is solid, the balcony tips—  
I cannot stare down wooden planks,  
these stairs are impossible,  
who sings my name below the oak,  
underneath this tower?

I've put on the wax lips,  
strapped tight the bodice,  
roped the hair back, let the curls sway—  
where's the gentlemen caller,  
is his silhouette still here?

I heard the footsteps, a dance  
dragging in the brain—  
choreography patters now,  
he waltzed with me here—

I like to play the victim, gag and all.

Ride your stead, puck the lips—  
I'm sleeping with you,  
and without the beauty.