

ARABESQUE

Akhim Yuseff Cabey

at fifth position
along the bar's countertop
I announce
the suppleness
of my bones.

I am lit below
by Jameson poured
in a ring around
my feet & set aflame
by stylish
white regulars
who've paid
to see me dance.

I perform
a routine of dizzying
pirouettes that fade
into a majestic
split. here, I bend
my neck and open
my mouth for patrons
to deposit
bills and coins
chased by shots fruity
and affordable.

what fuck once wrote
that one must first
love himself
in order to be
loved by others?

I learned young
to hook
my legs behind
my head and suck

the marrow
from chicken bones.

hunger infused
flexibility is hope
for the weak
to be dimensional
once more. en pointe
on one leg
I extend the other
behind me à la
hauteur, then lean
my trunk forward
in penchée.

here, I'll freeze
until the last drop
is swallowed
and the fire
around me is doused
out of existence.

for Mike P.