We almost died climbing the falls

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Second Prize Winner

Freedom

The gentle,
raindrop
drumming of
fluorescent wings
stretched across
a violet canvass,
feverishly pumping,
dodging swiping nets
and chubby fingers,
higher and farther from
chaos.

--Veronica McGlynn

Third Prize Winner

We almost died climbing the falls and I loved it
smiles of exhilaration nearly cracked our heads in halves
gallons of blood tried to escape my skin
pulsing &
pushing
from behind my sternum and shoulder blades
I remember you sitting on the cold cement step of the arts &
crafts lodge
when we came back down the mountain
yelling
spinning circles in grass that had never been so green
as then
I wanted to sit with you
but I couldn't
I had to run
spin
yell
you laughed with us, at us, whichever
and laughing said to me in that offhand way of yours
--as if it didn't matter--
"You're cute"

--Monica Bradbury