

Holding My Breath

The pool is a mirror that will not lie
each stroke pulls me forward each breath a try
My lungs stretch thin like balloons set to pop
yet the clock keeps ticking the laps never stop

Chlorine is my cologne sharp and true
my hair holds the scent like it's glued with glue
Friends ask why my eyes are red every day
I laugh "emotional depth" though goggles betray

But then the shift comes some days I can fly
cutting the water a blade through the sky
Other days I sink heavy ambition in tow
patience the only stroke I manage to know

For swimming is less about winning a race
and more about breathing in life's crowded space
It is drowning with style control in disguise
a lesson in silence a fight to be wise

And when the whistle blows I surface for air
as if leaving behind the child still there
Each lap is rehearsal for what is in store
the failures the pressure the waiting for more
Perhaps that is the secret the water once knew
not strength not speed
but the faith breaking through
that beyond every struggle

there is air there is blue.