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Poems

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ON THE COUNT OF THREE

On the count of three,
I tell him, take a
deep breath and hold it.

On the count of three
I do the same but
he doesn't know it.

On the count of three
everything boils down
to this one moment

in which I listen,
eyes closed, to his neck
for sound of movement,

the sound that comes from
liquid flowing not
smooth, but turbulent

while the eddies of
our previous breaths
dissolve around us.

EPLEY MANEUVER

In medicine
it's the closest we come
to exorcism:

placing unsoiled hands
on either side
of the patient's temples;

shepherding the head supine
toward the shoulder
with the afflicted ear;

confirming the presence
of a demon on that shoulder
by eyes possessed;

allowing said demon to
stir up trouble
for about a minute;

turning the cheek
a quarter circle
the other direction;

giving audience to
an angel there before rolling
further toward good;

ending upright
with a stone uncast,
free to turn again.

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