Nude Descending a Staircase

By X J Kennedy

Toe after toe, a snowing flesh,  
a gold of lemon, root and rind,  
she sifts in sunlight down the stairs  
with nothing on. Nor on her mind.

We spy beneath the banister  
a constant thresh of thigh on thigh;  
her lips imprint the swinging air  
that parts to let her parts go by.

One-woman waterfall, she wears  
her slow descent like a long cape  
and pausing on the final stair,  
collects her motions into shape.


Source: Cross Ties: Selected Poems (University of Georgia Press, 1985)