

Kyla Marshall

## DEATH'S WAY

Everybody likes to say it—maybe you do, too: *It could have been me, in those towers.*

That famous Australian swimmer said he was to go to the top that day,

to see the city anew.  
Something or another stopped

him—traffic, a change  
of heart, fate's intuition.

He is one of so many who it could have been. Or who knew someone who it could have been: *My friend*

*called in sick that day, thank God....My sister is chronically late to work, or else...*

The voice trails off as the mind thinks on what was nearly lost.

It could have been you, or I,  
jumping, or running, or burning

that day. It could have been some casual friend—the pretty girl whose number

you took at the flea market, or the man who always makes my Philly cheese steaks, sans

cheese, and never asks why.  
But it wasn't. And yet we revel

in the possibility of our own deaths, are seduced by it, by the thrill of just scraping by.

*I knew her, the lady on the 103rd floor with the flaming red hair, the woman says in the café. She is proud*

to have come so close to death—a car nearly swiping her off the road—but to have escaped,

to have saved herself, if only by chance.  
How slick her maneuver out of death's way;

how fast the wind whips by, on its way to take  
somebody else.