

# Painting

He's only confident when painting her, thinks he'll drown  
in the way she's holding her rust colored curls piled on her head,  
her back to him, her geisha eyes to the left and looking down.

She's aware he's staring at the tattoo of her hometown,  
covering the car crash scar that left her momentarily dead.

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as he runs his brush up Lincoln Avenue following it around  
the jagged curve of healed ribs; a deep inhalation spreads  
her back for him, her geisha eyes to the left and looking down.

The bristles, dry, soft on her, work their way towards the crown  
of Dell's hill, the scene of shattered safety glass, where she bled.

He's only confident when painting her; he thinks he'll drown

in the first few strokes, the empty blacks and lonely browns.

He checks the light, picks up his palette, begins with the red,  
her back facing him, her geisha eyes to the left and looking down.

Hours she sits modeling, breathing, being, silently reciting Pound's  
'In a Station of the Metro' she memorized while in the hospital bed.

He's only confident when painting her and thinks he'll drown  
staring at her back, her geisha eyes to the left looking down.

# Eric Primm