Sleep

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Of course, that first pole was under more wire tension than this one.

I unhooked my safety belt and started the long and eerie climb down. This was worse than going up. My hands hurt terribly, and I kept having visions of the only time I had watched a climber “burn” his way down a pole. He had been careless, and as a result he picked splinters out of his chest, arms, and legs for about two weeks. Not to mention a broken arch incurred in the fall.

Only about thirty feet up now. Not high enough to really get hurt, but much too high for jumping.

I took bigger steps now that I was getting closer and closer to the ground. Slamming my spikes deep into the pole with each downward lurch and then, I missed! My other foot was jerked loose from the pole as I fell . . .

Thank God I was only three feet up. My knees gave out when I hit the ground, and I just sat there, proud of myself, fiddling with the straps on the spikes to hide the fact that I couldn’t have made my knees support me even if I had wanted them to then.

Nicholas M. Saum, Sci. Jr.

Sleep

IT comes — dull — heavy — warm,
drawing my eyelids down
pushing a frown on my forehead
pressing my neck
pulling my shoulders down
creeping over my back.

If I lay my head on my arms
just for a minute
it will be gone.

But I must not!
A test, a chapter, a paper.
A letter, a phone call, a meeting.

Sleep is escape.
Sleep is no-thinking.
Sleep is — sleep.

Beth Bones, Sci. Sr.