

**Vladislav Khodasevich**

**“Acrobat”**

Translated from Russian by **Adam Lerner**

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Across the sky is stretched a tight braid,  
An acrobat walks across, easy and brave.

In his hand lies a stick, light as a hair,  
Below a crowd awes, with its nose in the air.

Pushing and shoving they look at the sky,  
Deep in their hearts they hope he won't die.

An old lady sits eager in her balcony chair,  
A drunkard looks up, his wine glass in the air.

The braid is stretched tight, blue and clear is the sky,  
Easy and brave, the acrobat walks by.

And if the unhinged buffoon were to slip,  
The crowd down below would watch as he hit...

The ground – holds a poet, who calmly walks by,  
His craft is as dangerous as the man in the sky's.