

Two Forces I Have Known

by [Valerie Wohlfeld](#) in the [September 2024](#) issue

Published on August 15, 2024

Centrifugal

Steadfast outcast, I am fast
in my inertia from womb to grave.
Pseudo force, here is gravity without a cause.
Outward, outward, out—
am I ever-flung outward-bound
to outer dark? Solo solace,
when death claims me will it be as the snake
 who no longer claims its own shed skin
to live again? Yet I have envisioned
One so vast He is unending universe
and does not sorrow in cold orbits of traverse.

Centripetal

God's cold orbits of traverse
fix rotating route: I cannot flee,
I am not free in fleeing to free my soul from Him.
Inward, inward, in—
I am spiraling to a center's core,
God draws me in. Of all waters,
all beings, He's the wellspring.
He holds me fast, wheel to linchpin.
Out of some whirlwind into some whirlpool,
I am as one bone
in some great winged breastbone.