

## JOEL RUDINGER

### *Suicide*

Many times as a boy I leaped from Suicide  
at Centennial Quarry. We tucked  
our elbows rib tight to keep from overreaching.  
Feet first or over forwards we feared  
a bellysmack, or worse, the Crusher  
when the dive was faulty.

You had to push off hard to get far out,  
far enough over the rocks, but not too far.  
And we all knew well the arc of the perfect  
body was equal to the grab of the toes  
plus the spring in the knees  
less slippage on the little platform's narrow slats.  
And if on a fast approach the ledge was slick  
and the leap came off without gusto or guts,  
if the arc went bad as the water hit . . .  
Jesus, you never came up  
and that was that.