

ALMA FULLERTON

FLIPPING
FORWARD
TWISTING
BACKWARD





FULL-DAY SUNDAY PRACTICE

In the gym club
there's always someone
who flies higher
and works harder
than everyone else.

In the gym club
there's always someone
who pushes to be
number one.

In the gym club
there's always someone
who can do
anything.

When I am
in the gym club
that someone
is me.

There's
no better feeling
than being number one
when everywhere else
you're last in line.

FIRST LINEUP

After an hour of
conditioning
Coach Tami has us
all line up.

“What do you want to
work on today?”

As she goes down the line
each of us tells her which skills
we want to work on.

When it's my turn
I say my triple-full on the track
and my giant pirouette
full twist full away
on the bars.

I've never tried a
triple-full on the track
but last week I accidentally
over-rotated on a double
so why not?

LUNCH BREAK HOMEWORK

Emma Lea Donovan.

She's been my BFF
since we were three.

We met
in Tumble for Tots.

She knows all
my secrets
and I know hers.

During our gymnastics lunch break
Emma Lea helps me
with my homework.

We sit in the corner
book opened.

Taking my pencil,
she helps me
by filling in the right words.

I say, "I wish I had smarts
like you."

Coach Tami looks up
from where she's sitting and says,
"Claire, you have plenty of smarts.
You pick up a routine
faster than anyone."

She glances as Emma Lea
finishes my work.
“And you can
trick your friend
into doing your homework.
That takes
real smarts.”

Hearing Coach Tami
say I have real smarts
makes my heart soar higher
than Simone Biles
on the uneven bars.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

For every skill
I practice
I do it

one
step

at a time.

Perfect the
giant pirouette.

Stop.

Perfect the twist
with a spotter.

Stop

and again.

Stop

and again.

You need to have
every step perfect
before you can
put it all together.
Otherwise
there's a good chance
you'll take the bar in the head.