

2004

## The Cord Extends

Jess Haberman  
*Denison University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Haberman, Jess (2004) "The Cord Extends," *Exile*: Vol. 51 : No. 2 , Article 5.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol51/iss2/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.

### The Cord Extends

At the gallows, his head dips  
with the sun, aching  
as the coarse rope stings  
his unshaven neck. He breathes  
deeply the dust and dares  
the crowd to search  
for fear; they won't find  
it in his eyes. He isn't apologizing  
because he doesn't regret what he's good at.  
The noose tightens in warning;  
he glances at the excess  
resting coiled at his feet,  
as the cord extends  
before him: a thin horizon  
he must cross with stars in his eyes.  
His hands unbound now,  
he stretches them to either side,  
a T with makeshift wings,  
and inching along the tightrope,  
he avoids the silent crowd's gaze  
as beads of sweat drip to the floor  
where the safety net would be.  
With eyes watching from every direction,  
there's no hiding his fear now, and he knows  
the burning finality of his mistake.  
A sound: the moment's  
distraction. He falls  
three feet and stops.

Jess Haberman, '06