

1989

## Out of Body

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my knee to the bone. The nuns told me to offer up  
the pain for the poor souls in purgatory.  
I bled the whole way home where my mother called me  
sweetheart and precious all day long.  
Angels sat next to me on the couch where I lay  
and thought about the sisters, their bony  
white fingers, their yellow teeth and their  
rock-scarred sign that said NO RUNNING  
that we threw stones against for pennies,  
even during summer, but the thing just stood there,  
its concrete foot dug in deep.

### OUT OF BODY

The ladder leaning against the house  
Is missing a rung,  
So you have to take a giant step  
Half-way up. I'd fix it but I like  
The feeling of leaving the earth  
For that extra stretch. It's like  
Stepping outside my body, and I think  
I could take more steps like that  
And scale the entire distance  
Between body and spirit, extending one  
To leave the other — non-matter  
On its way up indefinitely.  
All you need is a slight wind to start with,  
One that brushes but doesn't bruise your cheek —  
And just the right degree of forgetfulness,  
The sky so full of stairs  
I could step off, and walk anywhere.