

Emily Picha

"The Fire Escape"

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I can still make out the chalk lines
in the corner lot
you swore you erased them
with four long winters
and a garden hose that spanned five blocks

but you can still get into those rooms
where even the heatervents don't blow
and nobody knows the lock combinations
cause that's a place nobody even bothers to go

and now you're staggering down the alleyway
and now you're halfway up the fire escape
and the only thing that ever keeps you awake
is that one way ticket home

I keep trying to get close to the mystery
and I walk that way sometimes in my dreams
where we dance on checkerboard masonry
my dress is ripping at the seams
and you say you've got my fortune
stuffed in your vest pocket
from chinese food two hours ago
and I dare break out the jack knife
and tear open that silk pocket
instead of saying is that so

ah but this was just a sweet dream
with my cheek pressed against yours
this was a game of our feet
played out on checkerboard floors

and I guess that I've won.

You insist on playing that piano
with the four broken keys
and I am scrubbing down the hardwood
down on my knees
we've peeled the paint off the windows
and let the light climb in
we put christmas lights on the fire escape

i can see them glowin on your skin
and now I am
halfway out the window and
you've got your ticket home
I'm halfway out the window
I guess I should have known,
but how could I have known
I am halfway out the window.

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