

Recognition

Connie Post

Ten thousand years ago
would you have recognized me

would you have heard the wind of servitude
in a low hummed song beneath the earth
would you have lifted your head from an old night
and noticed me
gathering food from a field far away

would you see the loose clothing
hanging off center, between stones and survival
would you notice me kneeling
even when no one asked
as I crouched to pick up acorns and beetles

would you see the sagging breasts
the anguish that looked like sky
the babies I birthed and lost

would you have recognized
the cadence of my tousled hair
moist tendrils in the mouth
pulled inside the body
like a field of sin

would you walk toward me
through yellow and faded grass
push aside the mute stalks
that seemed to know
one day
you would come for me
lead me toward the cave
of your open mouth

the tongue of memory
pushing me out
into this moment
still looking for your tombstone
before there was a chisel
a way to shape the stones

Fire Escape

Connie Post

I think I could find this door
if flames were everywhere

I think I could find
the small exit sign
if orange held the
scorching words
crackling out of a mouth

your mouth
to be exact

I swear my elbows
could carry me across
this flat room
even if I had to hold my breath

but no one told me
I would need a crowbar
for the door

I keep reminding myself
I left you in my twenties
but find myself sitting, sometimes
in the same armchair
looking out a half open window
screaming fire
when no one else
is in the room