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Ladder Ode

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Ladder Ode

The ladder won't
make you a star.
On its back,
won't take you
anywhere,
but gives you
a place to
come home from.
Makes you believe
you
own something,
hold
something more.
This is true
of water and birdnests
abandoned as old
shoelaces. We must keep
the stout-legged
ladder, for propped
against a lean,
a roof or
burning house,
to the child
who sleeps upstairs
and the widow
the ladder is a hero.
How else are we to stand
next to the weathervane?
The ladder won't go
anywhere without you,
but sits and waits
while you hunt,
tired from what you are.
Lets you walk away
and return as many times
as you do. Yet,
says nothing.
Who loves you
that much. Who listens
when you're caught
in the middle of up

and down,
can't find your way
home. No hand,
no foot,
no skirt to look up.
Listen.
The ladder
hears
drums
upriver
and rings.

Joy Lyle