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A Stair I'd Never Come Across

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Congratulations to Ryan Hunton, winner of the 2009 Flo Gault Student Poetry Prize with his poem entitled, "A Stair I'd Never Come Across."

A STAIR I'D NEVER COME ACROSS

by Ryan Hunton
Western Kentucky University

It's much quieter here. Coughs are distant;
Even the bell at the top of the hill
Is so low, you'd think it was beneath you.

The hardly audible Chinese conversation
Becomes louder, louder until you see
Their girlish faces looking back at you,

And you, you and you and you; you and I,
We come to a door I'd never noticed before,
And through the small window, a glimpse, we see

A dangling, dripping darkness there

And an old dust I'd never heard before,
And there's a stair I'd never come across
Which leads downward, as some stairs do, to

The basement of the old library. Oh,
To push across the emergency door
And yell descending in dust and echoes

As ancient as the blue-grey that envelopes –
We are moving our arms in slow motion
When we are swept away by history.

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