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## The Church & The Steeple

this is the way we watch humans parade we fold  
our hands like this lock step this is the way we  
know how we feel we know how we feel like this  
lock step this is the way we peel back the fabric  
our tongues find their nerve ends like this lock step  
this is the way we close our eyes the empty skies  
fill up like this lock step into the earth we watch  
the parades parade through the earth like this lock  
step this is the buzzing of stinger to star our  
prayers are old prayers like this lock step a bayonet  
scar a shrapnel bazaar the wind through our shelter

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## One Night a Girl in the Suburbs

There is a door behind the door that conceals everything she does not want to learn.  
Father delivers the woman's enemy to her doorstep while Mother makes a list of  
betrayals while Sister's mind is populated by the ghosts of wallflowers: fall leaves swirl

around the noose the girl has tied to the tree shadowing the grave of the family dog. Doll feet swinging in the yard. Her mind is made up. One day was so elusive it became unspeakable. Their foundation slopes East forcing cracks into spidery basement letters the family uses to interpret the neighborhood. This is a tiny script. Irony makes atrocity palatable to Brother and to the friends of Brother who fill the house with their mild ejaculations. The girl stands in the driveway imagining the limbs of her family tumbling fist over elbow into the ocean.

Peter Conners

Peter Conners is author of the prose poetry collection *Of Whiskey and Winter* and the novella *Emily Ate the Wind*. His memoir *Growing Up Dead: The Hallucinated Confessions of a Teenage Deadhead* will be published by Da Capo Press in spring 2009. His website is [www.peterconners.com](http://www.peterconners.com)