

## Sleep Talking Jessica Stump

I fell asleep with eight legs  
on my back. Still as a dream  
in death, my spine the ladder  
for each step of the Spider, and as it climbed,  
it talked to itself: "I walked on water  
and swam the air, scared a man  
who scared me.  
I ate my husband  
before love made him  
a victim." The Spider  
hickied my neck—bites  
strung to a mouth left

open for breath—and capped a tooth  
with its body in rest...

*Is there an echo  
when I think?*

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