

**Elizabeth Kate Switaj**

He Almost Got to Brooklyn

Mark built elaborate ladders  
for fences he imagined  
cd rise or slide before him  
:  
slats to carry feet  
over chains linked  
through white-sunned cedar  
or less fragrant  
peeling wood  
,  
sides that bent like playdough  
to throw  
or bent like steel  
to lean  
  
He must have had a hundred  
before he took a step  
and then another  
&  
he never had to turn  
thanks to fire escapes & terror  
-ism melting pillars  
never bled before  
but the waiting took years  
for his muscles to rest  
at less than a mile  
Mark never left Manhattan  
or ideas he knew there

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