

MARVIN BELL

The Troubling

I still think of the suicide standing on a ladder
to climb over a fence at the ball field
when he could have just walked around it.
He had a dark color for a last name
and seemed okay except for his father,
famous for a series of fire hazards
he made with his own hands and rented.
I must have let the book fall closed on which
the confession appeared after a candle
was applied. I dozed off without consigning
the name to memory and woke trying
to manufacture distance to go with time.
A white, slightly ruffled sky in late summer
covers time and the sun, and in any case
it isn't true what they say about the water
and the air and even the fire,
but about dirt what we heard was
ashes to ashes and dust to dust,
though we were not to recognize the voice.
There is a windowsill on which a frail
winged corpse of no weight has fallen
next to the husk of a ladybug.
There is an outside beyond the farthest
thing we can imagine. There is a schoolyard
with a fence around it to keep out bad ideas
just up the street from the bus station.