The Presence of Absence

My brother walked
in his sleep sometimes
when we were growing up,
troubling our parents and
bewildering him.
I was envious.
I asked and asked
how the world felt in the dark,
what he saw and most urgently how
could I learn to? He brushed
me away, not
wanting to talk about it
and then
one night I’d gone to the bathroom
and he came silently up
the stairs in his thin pajamas,
bits of grass stuck to his
damp bare feet, and his wide-open
eyes didn’t know me, and I
think I never again
quite trusted my brother
having seen him that
one time with some
stranger using his body.

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