

## charley horse

leg hurting tonight reminds me of how my dad + I used to  
run across each other in the dark  
when I was little + my leg would hurt.

he had a lot of leg cramps at night  
he called that *a goddam charley horse*  
I used to wake up with intense pain in my leg  
the leg I broke  
trying to catch up with him  
when I was first learning to walk.

sometimes we'd both wake up at the same time  
on the same night  
I liked this because I got to spend some quiet time  
alone with him.

I never wanted to go back to bed on those nights  
we'd sit in the living room or the kitchen  
in the dark or with a dim light on  
he seemed more open in those moments  
I didn't feel like he hated me then  
maybe it was because he was sleepy  
or in pain.

those were special occasions for me  
nothing to accomplish or be judged on  
we each had our own pain  
similar but not the same  
he was empathetic  
I felt connected to him.

in those brief moments  
I always felt that I was just like him  
just like I always wanted to be.