

# Isaac

When we had climbed to the top of the mountain  
and there was no lamb,

I remember looking at the sky, September blue  
and cold, the clouds

rushing together so fast, the ground,  
for a minute, seemed to move

they rushed so quickly, I wanted to say  
like horses, when

in a voice I had never heard before, he asked  
me to lay myself down.

I didn't feel the rush of sudden wind:  
as from a wing, that my father felt,  
or hear the voice like silver he said he heard,  
I didn't.

I only remember the clouds rushing across the sky  
like horses

and the blood pounding inside me like water  
and pushing, stumbling

down the mountain to the far pasture  
to the ram that was my favorite

and weeping into its filthy matted wool,  
crying out.

--Marie Howe