

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Sharon Olds: "Indictment of Senior Officers"

Sharon Olds · Thursday, April 19th, 2012

Sharon Olds was thirty-seven when she published her first book of poems, *Satan Says* (1980). Since then, she has been the recipient of many awards including the 2013 [Pulitzer Prize in Poetry](#), the 1984 [National Book Critics Circle Award](#), and the first San Francisco Poetry Center Award in 1980. She currently teaches creative writing at [New York University](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

### Indictment of Senior Officers

In the hallway above the pit of the stairwell  
 my sister and I would meet at night,  
 eyes and hair dark, bodies  
 like twins in the dark. We did not talk of  
 the two who had brought us there, like generals,  
 for their own reasons. We sat, buddies  
 in wartime, her living body the proof of  
 my living body, our backs to the vast  
 shell hole of the stairs, down which  
 we would have to go, knowing nothing  
 but what we had learned there,  
 so that now  
 when I think of my sister, the holes of the needles  
 in her hips and in the creases of her elbows,  
 and the marks from the latest husband's beatings,  
 and the scars of the operations, I feel the  
 rage of a soldier standing over the body of  
 someone sent to the front lines  
 without training  
 or a weapon.

*"Indictment of Senior Officers" is from the book, Satan Says, by Sharon Olds, © 1980. All rights are controlled by the University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Used by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press.*

This entry was posted on Thursday, April 19th, 2012 at 3:28 am and is filed under [Poetry](#).  
 You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a

response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.