

JOHN LAMBERSKY

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE SEPARATION

I remember throwing the ball around
with my dad;

We stood in the street
until it got dark and all I could see
was the ghost of his outline. I waited
for the ball to emerge from the night
and hit my outstretched glove

an act of faith
in the street where we used to
shovel the snow in winter, and
he would put out the trash

while my mother, face occasionally aglow
from her cigarette, watched from the porch.

DRESSING ROOM

As educations go, you could do worse
than to sit perched on the edge
of the husbands' chair at the department store,
the pattern of the fabric imprinted on your
damp palms, pinned underneath your small boy's thighs,
shins braced, wrapped around the metal legs of the chair,
furtive glances down the dressing room hall of mirrors
at all that multiplied flesh, those dinosaur thighs and round,
swaying breasts, making a study of the ceiling
until your mother comes

and collects you, her shopping done, nothing left to do
but look out the window of the car while
she talks on the way home.