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Childhood

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Jeddie Sophronius

Any of the streetlights on roads I've walked alone
& gates of the schools to which I was dragged
could easily be in my dream.
It's like I never age.

I see a boy screaming
in the small department store.
His mother has no money to buy
an action figure for his birthday.

He threatens to run away,
but he never enters the waters
when he's at the beach. He finds himself
walking along the same roads every night.

The same old lady jogging in the pink jumpsuit.
The same pine cones clogging the water fountain.
The same bus drivers chatting over iced coffee.
Different countries have different street names,
White Wood, Seventh Ave,
to him they're all the same.

Childhood is unkind to the lost. I see a father
waiting outside the airport arrival gates, his waves passed by me.
He embraces a little boy all bundled up in boots & sweaters.
In a different childhood, the boy could be me.