

Frames

in the window
i watch you fight the rain
wind tearing at your coat
your steps taking you into a close up
lightning flashes

the camera captures
me framed
by my birthday party
a five-year-old native
ready to spear the cake

poised in the doorway
ready to toss you an umbrella
i cannot move

can't you
sit still
the voice thunders
i cannot
smile at the man behind the box

the box is soaked
but what's inside
should still be
okay so open it
inside there's a locket
holding our pictures

my five-year-old daughter
sits behind the toy box
looking at photos of a birthday party
of a girl she thinks she knows

after the party there is only one
picture a girl standing in the rain smiling
one hand holds a folded umbrella
the other touches a locket
hinting there might be a man
on the other side of the picture.

JANEEN WERNER-KING