

Signing Him Away

For eighteen years I waited for his call,
And when it came
I feared his voice. I heard the same brutal
Seduction, the same
Dark timbre. Double pain.

And I'd be lacking all the qualities
Surrounding him:
No clever turn of phrase, no sparkling speech
To wallpaper my shame,
No childhood clichés.

No day without a thought for him, always
Regret at signing
Him away. Oh, but his eyes
Would burn and sting,
Would sue my dreams,

Would claim his other life, and mine.
I sit here trembling
Waiting for his face, not knowing
How to mime the mother role, dreading
His footfall and the ring

I cannot answer.

LOTTE KRAMER