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1. First Sighting: Rochester, New York, Age Three

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### 1. First Sighting: Rochester, New York, Age Three

In the backyard lot on Rowley Street, we  
play catch: my father, pregnant mother, sister,  
brother, and I. A few fat drops of rain  
fall, splash leaves, twigs, stones, dust, us. We line up  
to climb up back porch steps. I loiter there  
behind my mother, she, who fails to note  
my buster-browns' slow ascent to the door.  
Falling out of place from the exit in,  
I arch my neck, strain my eye, try to find  
high up in the sky the miraculous  
root of a water bead. The heavens part,  
clouds billow open, and the son of man  
appears between stormy masses. He winks  
a full-of-knowing look at me. The clouds  
reassemble; he's gone. My father stands  
behind the screen door to call me into  
our house of shadows. I wonder: should I  
tell the man I love the most, I saw Christ  
wink from heaven? On cue: lightning, thunder.

JANET LOWERY