

## *The Word Box*

CHRISTOPHER BROOKHOUSE

We can't sleep.

I'm hungry, she says.

I know what she wants.

I go to look for it.

The season is stuck on winter.

The moon floats clear and cold.

I look at my feet.

I remember peering through the X-ray machine.

I saw my bones in their new Buster Browns.

I tiptoe through the living room.

The ghosts are writing sonnets,

Or contemplating solitaire.

The cards have naked women on them.

CHRISTOPHER BROOKHOUSE

I find the word box on the pantry shelf.  
I push my hand inside and finger around,  
The way I used to search the crispies  
For the ring with the zircon chip,  
Guaranteed to turn blue in the presence of enemies.

I shake the letters out.  
Tonight I find the L and O and V.  
Only the E is missing.  
Yesterday I couldn't find the L.  
And before that . . . you get the point . . .

Sorry, I say when I lie beside her again.