Voices from a Hidden Classroom
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He carried his basketball wherever he went. Sometimes he bounced it fiercely and took aim at hoops that only he could see. Sometimes he twirled it on one finger like a bulbous ballerina. But mostly Paulie held the ball between his palms, against his chest, the way a preacher holds a bible to make god’s point. Just like his mother’s little Christ, it strengthened his grip on things, extended his palms around a world he was barely able to hold onto.
I keep my dreams in a dream box under the bed.

My sister Carmen says it’s just an empty box.

Carmen never sees what I see.

Her eyes are dark like a night without stars.
 WHEN TOUCH BREAKS A BRANCH

Touch is high voltage for Tanya.
Today she shook and sweat
right where she stood
when Pablo put his arm around her.
She twitched and tilted her head
until her ear was touching her shoulder blade.
Her neck was so bent out of shape
it looked like a broken branch.