

Closed

Before they gated our community

a boy made a snowball in the entry.

He patted it and rolled it till it doubled,

quadrupled and doubled again

Sensing mischief in the wind, other children

waded in, working with the elements.

When they quit the ball was six feet fat,

a swollen Mint Imperial

blocking the throat of the entry

All day it loomed at Mrs Parrot's gate,

twig-pricked and plastered in leaf mould;

Mrs Parrot, who, the Saturday past

had found our football in amongst her husband's winter greens.

She stabbed it with a kitchen knife before she threw it back

It was dark by the time the cars came in.

From his room the boy could just make out

Mr Parrot's orange Vauxhall Viva

wheelspinning, acquiescing back into the road.

By Russell Berry