

LAUREL RICHARDSON

We Are in Kroger's at Arcadia and High

We are the wheezy-eyed child sucking watered
down sugared up juice with a hand-me-down-look,
and the swollen faced mother, and

we are the father unbuckling our belt, and the
gray man with the palsied gait shuffling
inside our Goodwill blend suit, and

we are the acne scarred lady passive as space
fondling the emptiness of our
fourth finger left hand, and

we are the veteran of foreign wars with a DAV
pin in our lapel and canned Spam on our laps
wheeling past Grade A US PRIME, and

we are Miss America tap dancing in Old Glory
patches on Campbell Soup cartons and
Wonder Bread, and

we are the Thalidomide child become a man
holding our 10¢ off coupons like feathers
for our shoulder-hands, and

we do not grow tall in Columbus.
Or beautiful.

 We become us.