The Catch

A sudden throw and promise: *Catch this, I’ll give you twenty bucks*, said my father, who must have used his whole arm, given the spin of that stitching: up and higher than the house, than a giant’s reach, high as the trees and higher it ascended, proving the dimensions of this world on that afternoon thirty years ago, illustrating the gap between any two points: between the ground where a child stands, squinting, and the blue field overhead the hard ball pushes through; between the instant to disregard the sting to a gloveless hand and that sting—despite a father who doesn’t believe she can; between cannot and can: that I can never get that money now I must not think of, but rather the ball—how I kept my eye on the ball as it reached the top of its arc, showing me where to run and to wait: a chance for the open circuit to be closed—ball thrown by a father who doesn’t have the money on him right then, who later teases and asks, *What ball?*, between one, with her howling protest, and another, with his public denial, a father and a daughter, just between him and me: the catch.