

VANDALS, EARLY AUTUMN

Who shattered my window with a stone?
I thought it was the wind, willful
after a dry season, or heaven
making a terse remark. But aiming
my flashlight, I watched
the last boy's crimson back
struggle over the fence,
and a tiger's fierce face sewn
on his denim jacket as a namesake.
How his few years have plundered
the heartwood of reason; why should I
relinquish this house, this poetry
I shaped and reshaped with love,
to the wont of stray bamboo?
No use calling the sheriff nor
waking a friend. The angst is mine, mine.
I slouch; I sigh; my eyes
too bleary now to see
early-autumn's dragonflies
skim over the filthy tarn
and into the wateroat,
cut wateroat.

for Donald Justice