

Walking with Donald Justice

Tonight the stars are streetlights flickering.
The blind dog waits for us
To catch up then walks on past

The house screened in like an aviary
At the top of the hill we turn to descend
Along the golf course where alligators

Wait in the dark and stars come and go
Beyond the trees. One day the stars
Will burn out, but not tonight.

A distant barking brings back the night sounds.

The tree frogs call. The dog growls.

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Maybe it knew what was in the air that night.
It's why this poem is taking form
And why the neighborhood runs down its hill

And alligators lurk on the golf course —
Something a world away and heard before,

Grown too commonplace to regard.

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We turn back to the cul-de-sac.
Don says, A storm is coming.
Walking under a streetlight, he

Becomes a flickering light
Turning a corner into the dark.
The storm comes on and soon

Is gone the way storms go
From that place that time of year.

—*Jerry Harp*