

## WINDFALL

It's been cold lately.  
The trees have been shaking  
when the wind blows from the North.  
The brown leaves that still hang on  
vibrate noisily—a few fall.  
The ones that fell two months ago  
are still piled beside my house,  
waiting for rain to rot them.

I stopped raking my leaves  
two years ago. Nobody rakes  
the leaves in the Black forest;  
they just rot and rot and make  
more dirt. But nobody lives there.  
Just little animals like deer  
and squirrels and raccoons.

Maybe if I raked my leaves  
that dog would leave me alone.  
He always comes into my yard.  
When I'm sitting out  
on my porch trying to think,  
he comes up and starts  
barking at me. Sometimes  
I don't hear him coming  
and he gets all the way  
up to the steps before  
starting that horrible noise.  
I go inside to get my  
Daisy Santa Fe Express BB gun,  
but he's always gone when  
I get back.

I guess there was  
a strong wind last night,  
because a new dead branch  
is on the ground with the rest.  
This one's longer than the others;  
it must have fallen from  
the big pine that blocks  
my view of the mailbox.  
I've never seen one of the  
branches fall. They fall  
at night when I'm inside  
listening to the television  
or waiting for my clothes  
to finish drying.

They remind me of nuts  
that sometimes fall on my car  
when I'm driving alone  
where the trees hang  
over the road. I  
never see them, but  
they hit the hood  
and bounce into  
the windshield  
at forty-five  
miles per hour.

Those nuts scare me  
when they do that.