

DENISE BERGMAN

he opened the window's slit and climbed in

a friend suggests "compassion" "society" "circumstances." I tell her I don't care

I don't care if he was born into a tangled skein of back-stabbing brothers. so what. wrestled under the see-saw kicked in the face on the slide. I don't care. told tough it out don't cry no dolls god forbid no Lamb Chop mutant turtles and plastic characters whose names end in tron. I don't care. high fives slaps on the back never an embrace do I care. no. army boot camp be all you can be not who you want to be. I don't care. my dog would have lived a simple dog life and I after forty-one years would be writing about the mockingbird mimicking a squirrel to scare the neighbor's cat or about medical supplies blockaded from entering Gaza. do I care if his father left town his uncle pulled him into the woods. no. what is beaten out of the boy what is forced into the beaten-down boy so what. I don't care

I slept through the rattling uncoiled half-broken sash cord rollers. I slept through his steps on the floor. a moon was somewhere and somewhere was rain

blood on my shirt from my mouth never washed out. do I care where he came from. no. I don't care

he had a mother he did. he he he had a mother. she caressed him at least once he knew a caress. do I care. no. I don't care