

Boy loves every plan
sketches maps in his piecebook
scouts out buildings
sneaks out late
 at night
goes alone
until
he tells me, “You need to practice.”

from Jobe & Raynell’s second-floor apartment
we sneak up back stairs to a third-floor
ladder & out a roof hatch

under the stars we leap

roof to roof
buildings almost touching
travel a block
turn
run
two more roofs

& spray concrete
block wall
almost done & a head
juts from a window
mouth yells “Call the police” & we run

back across roofs I try to be quiet
but breath pants & heart
pounds & feet
clatter
sirens coming
we dive the hatch
scramble stairs &
tiptoe
click Jobe & Raynell's front door
locked behind us

in our beds
dark living room
sirens pass by
& we're
safe

Boy can't get enough
I ask "What if we get caught?"
He says "We won't."

With Tyrone & Dolores
we creep down
alleys spray

dumpsters & back doors
fences & walls
spray high as

we can reach
whisper & follow
hide & run

crawl over boxcars
dangle from ladders
one-handed

whisper & laugh
Tyrone & Dolores
say we're ready

to climb but I ask
"What about falling?"
Tyrone says

“Always have a plan.
Watch your step
& test ladders

before you climb.”
Dolores says, “Look
out for dark sky

lights & air shafts
& never go blindly
into the shadows.”