

## A Well-Bred Woman

She leaps to her feet  
condemning the cops  
who shot her son.

She turns into something  
primitive, screaming  
the American word

for a man  
who sleeps with  
his mother.

She puts her hand over  
her mouth as she hears  
the keys rattle, as they

are let out to walk free  
on the grass outside  
the courthouse where

no lion waits  
to eat them, though  
she prayed for one,

no owl hooting  
at the noonday sun,  
no calamity like

a building waiting  
to fall  
on the black sedan

that drives away  
with them  
down the highway.

The reporters ask and  
she tells them, Amadou  
is a common name

in her country, it is  
like stones on the road,

and there are many

fathers named Diallo,  
who all rush out when  
they hear the drums

saying your son  
your son your son  
Amadou. They look

everywhere, in the home,  
in the compound,  
in the cassava fields

down by the riverbank  
where the crocodiles  
steal the goats,

they search until  
they remember the one  
who went to America.

Then they hug  
the remaining Amadous,  
and weep.