

## Roland

I.

Holo Rusty

It was nice to hear from  
you that you stile remerberd  
Roland I wish you had said  
all that to him before he went  
I am not a speller so hope  
you can make it all out.  
Roland had asked me to put  
his ashes in the gulie  
acass the road but that land  
has change hands & they told  
us to stay out so I put them  
ander the Grap Vine he plantd  
the Grap Vine. Yes Rusty you  
can com vist with him if you  
lick. what was Rolands life  
befor he did not good he was  
daf he count stan up he had  
to be lifed but the day he did  
he said to me I am going  
to get well & I am coming  
home he said he found out  
that his family met more to  
him then all of Clafora  
so Gail bourt all his  
belongs home with him his  
frind wont me to put him in som  
park out thier but he wanted  
to com home. his memorial  
service was fine the Raven  
did a grat job. to bad  
you count be thier we had  
a puitcer of him the box with  
the ashes & one lille flower  
hes frind from Midland bourt  
for him. so every thank is  
all OK I miss him

II.

Your mother's face at the open door —  
your face: a raw plane  
whitened with the salt of hope and sorrow.  
The rose you planted back of the house  
when you were 15, and the hibiscus.  
Yard unmown, weedy, strewn  
with failed cars and spare machine parts.  
We walk like widows,  
leaning left to one unseen.  
Sitting beside the vine you set,  
breaking a twig apart in long fingers;  
your name ripening in the grapes above,  
bugs at rest on rotting leaves,  
a grocery receipt caught among the lily stems.

III.

Were you yawning in the kitchen,  
reaching for milk,  
when the blind germ woke  
in your blood's hoop?  
Dreaming of floods in the south of France,  
or pulling burrs from a long-eared cat?  
And when the moment of passing  
passed,  
and you came to,  
resolved anew,  
was this land's songspill —  
all burnished murmur and shadows a'peace —  
the wooing emanence you first knew?  
Did you lie fresh-cut on a clean cloth  
awaiting the vase,  
or move like a hound abandoned to the city?

IV.

Your locus is now a genesis  
where you thrive in cowed silence,  
no longer friend — but ancestor.

Rusty C. Moe