

Near Roe, Arkansas

My father left one morning
With the first spring rain
Striking his face. We
Slept on as he limped away
From our monotony. That
Was the day we said what we'd known
All along, that spring rains
Are all the same, the day
When one of us forgot
His name in the rain. The house
Was a funeral-parlor stiff
With aphasia. My father limped on,
To other names and faces.
Inside, we broke our silence,
Did our chores, killed
The daily chicken. Outside,
The day limped behind
The barn, smiling, smiling.

Patrick Worth Gray