



Dogwoods and Redbuds for Rita

We come driving south
into the hills in the rain,
to settle you into the earth.

Dogwoods and redbuds for Rita,
white and pink in the woods
turning green with new leaves
unfurling everywhere sheath wet.

You suffered for so many years
the agony of trying to speak
we must send you off with
a gift of very few words,
our father's baby sister,
last of ten children,
released at eighty-six.

We give you dogwoods and redbuds
in blossom and green leaves opening.
We give you gentle rain falling
on the rolling hills we love.

We give you dogwoods and redbuds
and rain falling on new leaves, Rita.

We form a choir of relatives
and sing thee to thy rest,

and sing thee to thy rest.