

Drinking Father

safe beneath Georgia
my father has passed out
of life into endless clay,
a state beyond
his world's imagined predators.

crows don't steal his figs,
blacks, his gasoline.
Communists have no designs
upon his sorry plot.

and now his sons
can't beg his time,
though time is all he has
whose brag, whose swagger
almost never stopped.
a man who slung his talk,
his drink
lies now, mouth-locked
with wax and wire,
his belly full
of the best embalmer's gin

the night he died
the sewers,
in real predation,
swallowed his blood
to the river.

downstream, next day
I drew him from the kitchen tap.

I drank my father,
then filled another cup,
some for the Commies,
the Negroes and crows,
all of us his children
together.