

(11)

6-5-00
for my son Gus

the wild roses were early
this year — a few pale blooms
faint-scented
in the hot air, & leeked
with black
from fires upwind, driven
closer ridge by ridge — forest
grass & thorn & flamed down
to the bone

& flakes of white, papery ash fall
around us — blackened pine needles
puzzle-bits of charred bark

ashen supper
for spiders tonight

one sweep of cool wind
then, again,
the oven's open door

but in the night
a light spatter on the roof
& today, your birthday, a deluge!
thunder & hail & the river
already rising — today
the ^{new} roses are ^{open} deep pink
~~and~~
& smell like rain

from heaven