

## To Remus

Long after Troy was conquered  
and all held their breath  
at the new eclipse, we fell  
from the sky and hoped that  
our father Mars would be merciful.

For this moment I recall  
ancient kings and jealousy.  
How we were left for dead—  
the mighty afraid of two  
infants, twins, brothers, heroes.

In the cold water of Tiber  
we must have basked, unafraid,  
somehow knowing the she-wolf  
would become our mother—  
the wandering herdsman, our father.

You were there with me, brother,  
when we discovered the vast, holy hills.  
For the first time since the day we  
were born you abandoned me.  
I—Palatine. You to Aventine.

You provoked, then, my heart to rage,  
brother, rent down my wall  
with your mocking, ignored  
the augury, and forsook your blood  
with the blow of my spade.

Oh, but it is no sleeping babe  
that lies before me now—no  
child that cries for the Capitoline.  
You are still my kin—very near.  
Within my soul I shall hold your honor.

I cannot look back, brother,  
for the glory of the gods is behind me,  
the world and the whirlwind before me.