

For Mabel Lee Hairston

West Virginia 1936-2010 Long Island, New York

The garden is along the walkway.
Last year's white lilies roses,
And those others
I have no idea the names of.
The lilies, sprouting
But not yet budded. The red rose stems
Barley out of the ground.
The others, which aren't flowers at all
But plants, fully grown
behind the plaque
In loving memory...

You loved your plants.
Some days I forget to water them.
Then night finds me in robe and slippers
Unspooling the green hose from the back,
Pulling, waking neighbors
Who surely think I'm crazy,
But you want your yard
The best on the block.

I'll make sure.