

RUST BELT

Hans VonMilla

Rusting in your orchard sits an old Dodge milk truck
With exuberant wartime fenders like Betty Grable's
thighs
You whiz by the hulk daily
Not noticing, never thinking
It's a crying shame

Your dad rescued it from land barons

Who bulldozed the stonerows
And hauled away the past
Nine cubic yards at a time
We named the old truck and loved it
The way you'd love a three-legged hound
Cousin Chris and I drove it a thousand miles
Never moving an inch

For a dozen years it hauled the stuff to build your
dreams
But after Viet Nam you parked it
Between an apple tree and forever
Near the family homestead, which like the old truck
Sits rotting, windows falling out, unpainted
Returning to the earth it came from

Now you have your own bulldozers
And large new trucks with
Seven point three liter Navistar diesels
Shiny reminders that in our family
We can't be bothered with the old things
We're like our grandparents
Who burned the Edison phonograph
The day they bought a new Victrola