

## Pasture Roses

The spell I'm under has little to do with how they drape  
disruptively over the fence or even how the rails form  
exact hexagons. Last night's wind came sudden  
churning the small fires built to stave off first frost.

Flickering, buoyant plumes rose high in the vineyard air.  
This is when the fragile roses crossed themselves, and in  
their shadows were the shapes of animals. I watched them  
very closely. My grandmother tacked a sheet to the wall

and, with her hands, made a snail, a moose, the farmer in the dell.  
But that was years ago. This time the shapes really exist.  
I've put water in a galvanized basin and the stick  
lying so still at the bottom is, without warning, irrefutably bent.

Charlotte Matthews