

*We knew a boy, a boy named*

# RUFUS

*December 13, 2005 – February 12, 2021*



*Woods*  
John Foy

I took the dog and went to walk  
in the auditorium of the woods,  
but not to get away from things.

It was our habit, that was all,  
a thing we did on summer days,  
and much there was to listen to.

A slight wind came and went  
in three birches by the pond.

A crow uphill was going on  
about the black life it led,  
and a brown creeper went creeping up  
a brown trunk methodically  
with no record of ever having  
been understood by anyone.

A woodpecker was working out  
a deep hole from the sound of it  
in a stand of dead trees up there.

And then a jay, much put upon,  
complained about some treachery  
it may or may not have endured,  
though most are liars anyway.

The farther in, the quieter,  
till only the snapping of a stick  
broke the silence we were in.

The dog stood still and looked at me,  
the woods by then already dark.

Much later, on the porch at night,  
I heard the owl, an eldritch thing.

The dog, still with me, heard it too,  
a call that came from where we'd been,  
and where we would not be again.