

## Randolph / My Mom's Letter

In teaching I try to create colleagues, others who can engage with informed articulateness in the conversation we all need to hold, in this world neighborhood, to work on pressing issues of the human community. In working with a student, I start with the individual treasure, listen for and appreciate the learned metaphor bag, and then approach traditional (and genuinely profound, at the deepest level) composition ideas like grammar, syntax, organization, writing from both the heart and the head, and following the dogs off into the woods—as Donald Murray says.

I lost my mom's letter, probably in some move from one state to another. I'm glad she wrote it, and I read it, and it mattered in my thinking. Whenever I read it, I felt closer to her, felt her there. That's the idea of writing, making things matter in words, bringing a presence into them.

+

## Final Journals

### Robert M. Randolph

Their journals stun me  
with honesty. I watch the sun go down.

A dog barks.  
Night wind opens a book.  
I sit by a simple window, one pane of glass.

The air inside my Aalto vase  
forgets its last secret.  
I read the journals again.

I am filled with silent tunnels  
and always want to be.

In the face of this writing  
let trombones play for swans,

let Kansas fall in love with the Verrazano Narrows Bridge,  
let all things interconnect with love.

Thank you all, all who do,  
for writing from your hearts.

+