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## In Russell, Minnesota

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IN RUSSELL, MINNESOTA

KAREN MORRIS

At midafternoon in Russell, Minnesota,  
the four alcoholics drink coffee in the cafe,  
which is closed. On the opposite corner,  
twenty-three cars nose up to the bar  
like pigs at a trough.

Ed tells the story  
about his nephew and the roof,  
and the other three smile,  
although Ed's been telling the same story  
for seventeen years  
and they heard it last on Tuesday.

It is better than watching the fields turn silver,  
better than worrying about  
the water rising south of the barn.

The rain drums against the glass.  
And Ed measures water for another pot.