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Ode to Rod McKuen

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Suddenly I spot you—
crouched among the milkweeds.
Rushing to your side, I kneel
and discover what I knew not before—
you’re dead.
We embrace and kiss passionately.
We are one.
Drawing apart, the shredded skin
from my chapped lips
gets caught in your braces.
Oh God—how beautiful!
Whilst lying there, side by side,
we look up, and ponder our fates
upon the cotton clouds of hope.
You are my Antony and I your Cleopatra.
Against the empty candy wrappers of time
we stand out, you and I, as
two fresh Willy Wonka bars.
Later, we know we must go,
but find ourselves somehow pulled back, restrained.
We talk of many things—
love, hate, mankind’s future, and solve
the infinite mystery of life.
At last, we are released
and walk home, hand in hand,
as the crickets chirp of our departure,
and the wind whistles through the reeds,
to bid us good-bye.