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## Nonrockaboatus

Bill Elgersma  
*Dordt College*, [bill.elgersma@dordt.edu](mailto:bill.elgersma@dordt.edu)

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# Nonrockaboatus

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*Bill Elgersma*

I'm sorry.  
I looked you in the eye  
when we spoke  
you were intimidated by my expression  
a passion my culture exudes  
in tone and energy  
gesticulating, animated  
I did not intend aggression

I'm sorry.  
We did not stay.  
You cooked the meal;  
hours of planning, cost, energy  
A thank you in your best skill.  
Concerned with expense  
We left for lunch  
—to help you—  
denying your gratitude.

And I'm sorry.  
I yelled when you cursed at me  
Bending the rules  
pushing the limits  
a world of gray.  
Survival has been your life,  
cheating and lying your tools.  
Breaking those tools threatened your survival,  
you reacted.

But I am not sorry for my culture:  
speaking the truth,  
clearly, plainly, honestly,  
an opinion not in accord.  
Denying culture to appease cultures  
Results in no culture.