“Not my grave, not my homeland” by Joseph Brodsky

Translated from Russian by Fillip Shelobolin

Not my grave, not my homeland,
I’m unwilling to choose.
On Vasilevsky island is
My body’s recluse.
Your facade so inky-blue
In the dark I won’t find.
Between lines fade accrued,
On asphalt I’ll confine.

And my soul, still restless,
Hurrying towards the gloom,
Will soar over vast bridges
In Peter’s fogful tomb,
With playing-april shower,
My snow-touched nape end,
I’ll hear a distant howl:
“Goodbye, my dearest friend!”

And I’ll notice two figures,
Red-cheeks pressed to their land
Far behind the long river
On their country’s tan sand.
Sisters, sparkling diamonds
Of some unlived years gone,
Running towards the island,
And waving the boy on.