

To Those Who Know (All Others Need Not Apply)

You see, I have these two children
one almost four years older than the other
and they are beautiful.
(It is said they hold promise.)

But anyway, they have this hair
that you couldn't buy -- even on the bottom
of a Revere kettle.
(Those who are poetic say they must have
stolen it from the sun.)

Now you must know I hold them dear
and so I stifle all hysteria to cry in my closet
among used brooms, light bulbs and buckets.
(I would not want them hurt.)

But you know and I know
and our children know
that all promises are kept
by only those who leave beauty -- alone.

-- Ruth Chaban

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Albany

car suspended
on flagpole
neon flashing
otel otel
yellow cyclops
street cleaning
night crawlers
swilling coffee
Gunnell-Geer
dignified burials
new town

-- Barbara Cowan

St. Petersburg, Fla.