

the kind of ache in the chest  
oceans and fine workmanship  
and lovely women and  
inaccessibility inevitably  
precipitate.

-- Hale Chatfield

Chardon, Ohio

the eucalyptus

last night i finally saw  
a eucalyptus plant.  
i keep running across them  
in other people's poems  
and you'd think they would be  
familiar by now.  
but there it was in a  
vase someone had tipped over,  
spilling water all across the  
carpet.  
when she said  
Watch out for the eucalyptus  
my palms began to sweat.  
it isn't often that poems  
become alive,  
and there was one being  
green and touchable.  
that i lay in a corner  
fondling it for the rest  
of the night  
should be obvious.

what an ache can do

55 years old and  
his back aches  
so now he wants a son.  
i'd hung around for years  
being punished with gifts  
i didn't want:  
good roofs, piano lessons.  
when i was small it  
wasn't too bad.  
he'd just want a kiss  
every now and then  
and if i could do it  
for ladies who pinched my  
cheek in the park  
i could do it for him.