

## BEA AND ORV, ORV AND BEA

when my uncle orv died  
i wrote by aunt bea a brief note of condolence,  
i mentioned, truthfully, that everyone  
who knew orv had loved him.  
bea wrote back that orv had been more ill  
than he knew for a long time  
and was lucky to have his suffering cut short.  
she also said that, in over forty years,  
she could say, in absolute honesty,  
that he had never spoken a harsh word to her.

because i knew him,  
and because i know her,  
i can believe it.

and if you think i'm working up to  
some cynical punch-line you're wrong.

only a greater fool than i  
would direct sarcasm at a man who found  
a woman as excellent as he deserved,  
and who realized it,  
and who let her know by everything he said and did  
she was appreciated,  
and who, through his appreciation,  
sustained her in that excellence  
with which she sustained him.

## OVERACHIEVERS; OR, A SLOW NEWS DAY

on page nineteen  
of the neighborhood advertising newspaper  
i read:

### STUDENT PIANISTS GIVE RECITAL

"three mc gaugh school students  
performed a piano recital last night  
for their parents and grandparents."  
it goes on to give the names of the students  
and of their piano teacher,  
but i will withhold these names  
on the assumption that this item  
could be an embarrassment to these children  
if, and it's a big if, they are allowed  
by their parents and grandparents  
ever to become adults.