

### **To Another Housewife**

Do you remember how we went,  
on duty bound, to feed the crowd  
of hungry dogs your father kept  
as rabbit-hunters? Lean and loud,  
half starved and furious, how they leapt  
against their chains, as though they meant  
in mindless rage for being fed,  
to tear our childish hands instead!

With tomahawk and knife we hacked  
the flyblown tatters of old meat,  
gagged at their carcass smell, and threw  
the scraps and watched the hungry eat.  
Then turning faint, we made a pact,  
(two greensick girls), crossed hearts and swore  
to touch no meat forever more.

How many cuts of choice and prime  
our housewife hands have dressed since then--  
these hands with love and blood imbrued--  
for daughters, sons, and hungry men!  
How many creatures bred for food  
we've raised and fattened for the time  
they met at last the steaming knife  
that serves the feast of death-in-life!

And as the evening meal is served  
we hear the turned-down radio  
begin to tell the evening news

just as the family joint is carved.  
O murder, famine, pious wars ...  
Our children shrink to see us so,  
in sudden meditation, stand  
with knife and fork in either hand.