

# For the Bishop's Wife

*Kathy Evans*

## I

Some of us stood together  
on your star-gray lawn,  
sang you Christmas carols  
in the warm California air.  
You stood under the porchlight;  
your arms, illuminated,  
around the yellowing infant,  
kept your son from blowing away.  
Our voices thinned behind the hedges  
and down the street.  
You tucked his feet into the drawstring gown  
and said, "Thank you for coming here  
in this darkness to sing."

## II

These flowers on the table do not know a child is dead.  
I take the stern stems of lilacs and anemones  
and stab them through the narrow neck.  
The pedals fall open, brilliantly indifferent.  
The leaves are slick, the water clear.  
Tomorrow the sky will be the color of blue smoke.  
I will bring you this vase in the daylight.  
Your eyes will thank me.  
I will walk away, remembering the wooden carols  
last December and your quiet arms.

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*KATHY EVANS is married and has four children. She has been published in DIALOGUE before. Her poems have also appeared in The California Quarterly, Imagine, Mother-Poet, and other quarterlies. She teaches through California Poets in the Schools.*