

PETER MURPHY

COLLEAGUE

Your daughter is dead yet you accept
my sympathies,
hypocrite.
You know I hate you yet
like snakes with interlocking fangs
our mutually devouring heads
are indefinitely resolved.
We work together. Work
is all we are.
Death and daughters are luxuries
muttered through potted
rubber plants.

HOME UNITS FOR THE AGED

We live inside
beneath the indefinite calm of ceilings
in the cool, out of the sun.
Always in the shade
we talk like people sitting down in church
while outside among the leaves a small dog barks.
We don't go out often,
Where the garden ends the doors are usually locked.
We see the world on television, watch what we eat,
keep in touch,
We listen to records, or, suddenly hurrying,
from time to time from place to place,
pause — unable to stop for long.
There's no resolution
to our silences.