

**The Time Between  
(for Don Shenker)**

**At night now we close the windows  
Anticipating morning's chill.  
The kids dress under covers,  
Appear at the breakfast table in sweaters  
And shiver anyway, hugging themselves.**

**As we go out to the fields a fresh  
Morning breeze surrounds us, smelling  
Like frost. Late summer flowers  
Greet us – Blazing Star and  
Rabbit Brush, Erigonium and Sage.**

**Birds read a message in the morning  
Chill. They gather in nervous flocks  
ready to rise in sudden, swirling  
Clouds when dogs disturb them.  
Instinct is calling in their blood.**

**The force of season's change,  
Like our orchard apples,  
Is not yet ripe. We need a good,  
Hard frost – a storm from the North -  
To ready them and us.**

**This is the time between summer's fullness  
And autumn's falling; the time between summer  
Flowers and the harvest of root and fruit.  
Orion has returned to the predawn sky and  
Venus is a morning star. We savor the mixing of  
Nature's themes – vitality, mortality -  
A time between the seasons of our year**

**September 1991**