Speech from My Several Mouths On Opening Day To an Imaginary English Class

John Murphy
Western Michigan University
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To an Imaginary English Class . . .

For Richard

Blackboards are no better
Than hieroglyphs of love
On toilet walls; song is
And is internal. This chalk
Excretes our common lot
And the error of collected loss;
Wisdom is a solitary thing
And is made within like music.

Like music your soft blood
Flows warm within, and moves
In harmonies of red and blue;
Beauty is forever in the cell,
And changing, makes feeling.

Makes feeling felt, and so
We are concerned with feeling
Which is song. Books will
Say your senses are for song;
Deaf to the felt mancrazed
Lisp of lies, some part
Of you will sing somehow.

Sing somehow, you orphans.
Beyond my failing mouths,
Books, chalk, and all charted,
There are pigments and rhymes
For every hour, every bird
That flies, and sighing within,
They murmur of our lives.
I will help you find them,
And will, barring my several mouths,
Share the loneliness they own.

. . . John Murphy