

Spring 1973

## Notes for Albuquerque

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## NOTES FOR ALBUQUERQUE

"There is a screw loose  
in the public machinery somewhere."  
Schoolcraft on the BIA, 1828

### I.

Threads spiral toward a center,  
turn on fingers of freezing children.  
One boy ran, scared by routine, a glaring sun.  
Hiding three days,  
they found him blistered.  
He fell asleep in Math, stupid.  
Call him a fire-eyed coyote,  
a berry in the paw of a bear.  
"Cut the heat  
in Arizona. It's warm there."

### II.

Beware of wind.  
Apache nights dry the morning. Why hatred  
in Ronan? They watch Red Sky Sun Down  
make an x. Her knowledge could protect  
the bees. "We must help the boarding schools,  
get water from Gila Community,  
dam it in the mountains."  
No rain in three years. Phoenix thrives.

### III.

A man was promoted today. Now an assistant commissioner  
dreams of junior high and Shakespeare.  
"Dark skinned savages with wailing songs."  
Dimpled girls once teased his stutter.  
He no longer listens. Children are sick  
in Santa Rosa. At Salt River,  
work Math on toilet paper.

IV.

Lose this hurt,  
a trestle lost to canyons. Our ground  
is now legend. Dew smokes along  
Ska na wis. The circle of meeting trees  
north of the Lawrence gives way to moss.  
Children are sick in Santa Rosa.  
We give away to this deepening thunder.  
The sand knows lizards and coyotes.  
Only owls have homes.