for john

Deborah Humphreys S.C.
A Tribute to the Memory of September 11, 2001
for john

in the tomb
...four days. John: 11

for john, Engine Co 33 Ladder 9

jaysus, if you had
been there. if you had
been visible amid the thousands
of flash points ... our brother
when faith comes due
for an early return
on chrism's marking, the day water
first poured out for welcome

another profession
of choice and duty
and God-knows-whatever sort

of grace assembles the unruly family
in this house. faith counts, leads
off racing. we have been ready since...

schoolchildren at their desks
would stop, recite three hailmarys
in doubletime trust

this young man has led us
to the living

water, the power and protection, pulsing
through me-lord hands that touch
the brow of any poor lazarus
or half-doubting thomas or son
of the messenger God:

I knew indeed that you always hear me
but I speak for the sake of all around me
that it was you who sent me.

Now take the stone away

DEBORAH L. HUMPHREYS, S.C.
28 October 2001