

Atonement

The room hisses.
Above the cold dark streets
the lights of the hill are shining,
and above them
the sky is bottomless.

A woman on the bus asked me today,
Why are we born if only to die?
I could not answer and she said,
I am angry with God.

— Elizabeth Romero

Revelation

You're homeless
remember your stance.
When you enter the mission doorway
and traffic
eyes will follow you.
Walking down the worn carpeted
aisle there are murmurs
whispering.
After being seated
they will pass out hymnal books
and expect you to sing
for your meal.
It reminds me of an essay
Benjamin Franklin wrote
we all pay for our whistles.
Try to listen to the word.
Sing if you feel
the spirit.
Later you know you will eat but
remember your stance.

— Earle Thompson



- Nurturing care for infants toddlers, and preschoolers
- Excellent teacher to child ratios
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Parent involvement welcome

Being Poor

It can be a kid as white as you,
a kid with an old face.
And it is hope,
hope that the sheriff doesn't come
to serve the eviction papers
when you happen to be home.
Hope
that you don't have to put anything back
at the check-out counter.

Being poor is waiting,
and telling your children to wait,
wait their whole childhoods away.

It is knowing
they blame you.

It is wondering
if there isn't a better way.

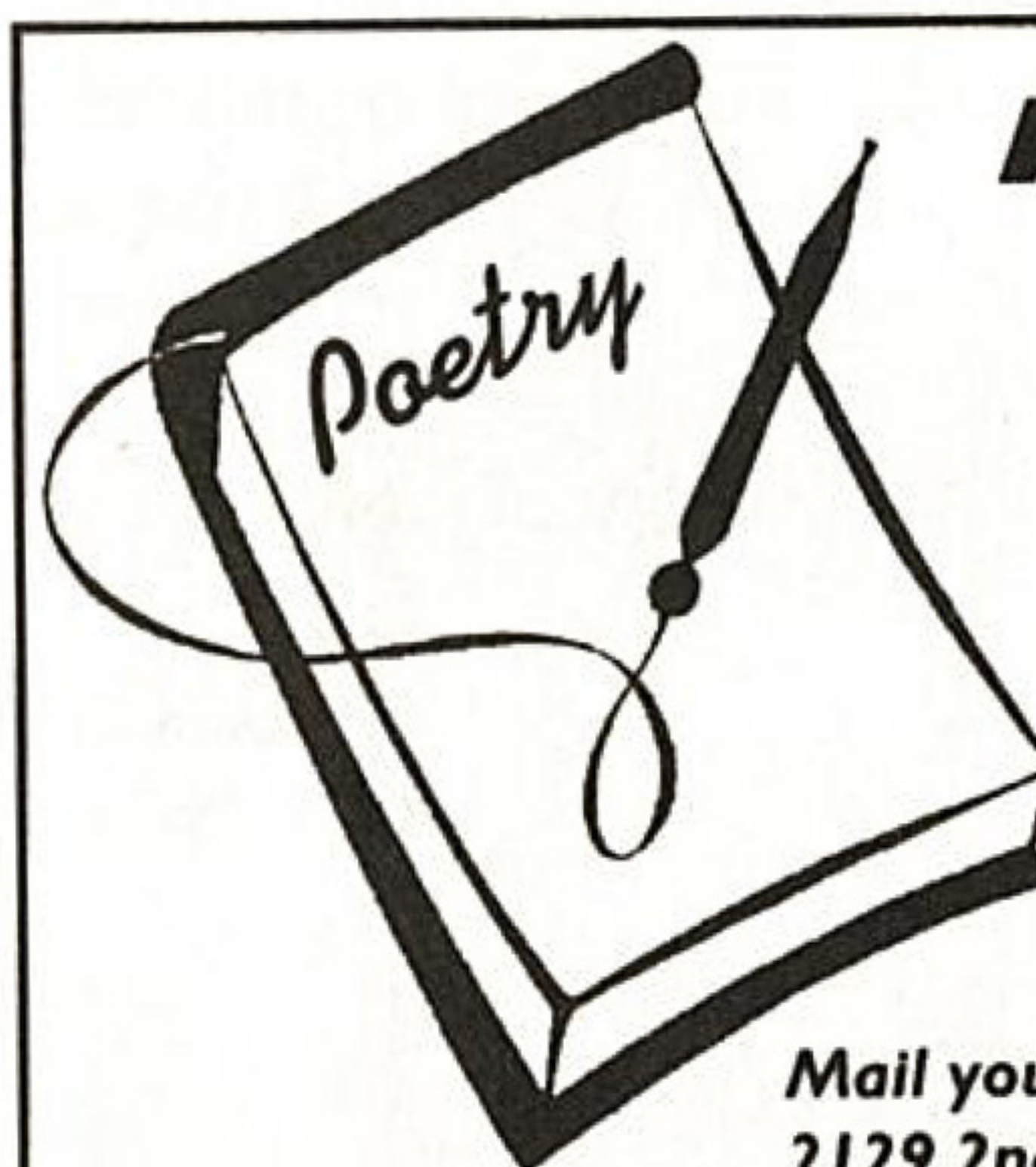
Being poor is trying
not to envy almost everyone you see.

It's not getting enough
and getting mad.

Being poor is bones and hearts
and marrows and gray street dirt.

If there is a God,
and if there is a God anywhere,
we haven't heard the half of it.

— Elizabeth Romero



Are you a Poet?

Our editorial committee will consider your original poetry for publication in *Real Change*.

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