

We See You...

For the Children and Angels Amongst Them

First day of kindergarten startles tiny Amina until she is able to drink from the cup that spells out her name

Hunger doesn't have a name or a picture of where it lives
Many angels amongst men and women follow it home at night

The smells of "plenty" and "enough" guide the children forth
Sweet fragrances invite them to drink and eat until the belly smiles

Paralyzed bones and paralyzed dreams arrive swaddled in dusty fabric
Fatima chews the bread she's dreamed about all night

Hiding behind a big barrel at the neighborhood flea-market
Raymond's smirk growls with hungry shame

At the farmer's market

I could have sworn I saw God weighing apples

We see you

We see the children who count the days in-between Friday and Monday
We see the workers who whisper love over the milk and cereal

Nameless siblings cruise the cars at the Chinese take-out parking lot,
"A dollar, please Mam? My sister and brother are hungry"

We see you

Wide-eyed Anna's stomach roars throughout class
she tells her teacher that poverty keeps her perfectly "cool-girl thin"

I could have sworn I saw God this morning

Pouring soup in the orphan's bowl

By Jaki Shelton Green
North Carolina Poet Laureate



Angelita waves to the school bus from beneath the neon heat of the blinking sign in the field where she sleeps hungry next to the gas station

***Angels amongst men and women measure kindness,
sift generosity, stir patience, drizzle kindness in between each sandwich***

***Angels amongst men and women lift heavy pans full of hope
Slice the air with so many kisses and honey-laced spoons***

We see you

You are the tiny pieces of light simmering at the bottom of bean pots
You are the shapes of love that whisper children to sleep at night
You are the safe oceans that invite them to wade beyond tides of hunger

We see you

Angels amongst men and women

We see you

Your hands wash cut season vegetables with a dash of succulent joy
Your hands and hearts feed more than physical hunger

Your hands roll and rise the dough that make the bread
Your prayers reside forever over fruit that you caress into ripeness

We see you

Angels amongst men and women

We see you.