To the Head Teacher.

10, Pecked Lane
Bishops Cleeve
Cheltenham, Glos.
GL52 4JE.
ENGLAND

Dear Sir,

I hope you will not feel that I am intruding from the wrong motives into what must be a period of intense shock and mourning for you and your school. As a newly retired school teacher I had identified very strongly with Christa Mc Auliffe's task. I had thought deeply about how I would have used the limited time at my disposal if I had been chosen to go in her place. Therefore I felt a very real sense of shock at the sudden end of her mission. I couldn't put my feelings into words until the night of February 2nd when our news programme showed us the small flame that began the hawlocaust. The scientific correspondent was talking us through the time sequence in a dis-passionate voice when suddenly the words I've written below came to me.

Challenger

Rapacious spark, miniscule and weak,
Unaware, as yet, of the havoc you might wreak;
Jealous perhaps, of Challengers powerful, fiery tail
You gathered to yourself some of its force, and together
blazed the trail
That extinguished the star-struck sparkle from the eyes
Of countless earth bound children who watched
their teacher die!
Your all consuming greed taught them a bitter
lesson from the sky.

But children, you can garner more than grief from this,
And when your weeping's done,
For every misplaced spark, seek out the obverse one —
The flame that will ignite your heart, enable you to rise
Above the debris of despair. Look up again towards the skies,
Accept the challenges of life, and soar
Hopefully, courageously, whilst you explore
The hidden face of destiny.