

## The Vipers

Gaza

You have to wade through the dogs, the vipers, the  
preachers, the brands  
With nothing between you and their sharpened teeth  
But the skin over your pale ivory skeleton.  
They can tear at the flesh. They can blacken tissue.  
They can bleed you. But they can't break the bones.  
And when you're through, when all that's left  
Is your breath on the air and their howls behind you.  
Raise the child in your arms to the sun.  
Give her light.