

DEAR MR. BUKOWSKI,

CLAUDIA CORNELISON

I read your poem in school today.  
They told me to tell them what it meant.  
I politely informed them that I don't read minds.  
I told them they should ask you.  
They said you were dead.

They said that it was my job to figure out  
what you were thinking  
and why.  
They said to look at the rhyme,  
the periods, the commas.  
They made me count the syllables.  
They said to circle words.

So I circled  
Of  
And  
For

They said those were the wrong words.

Then the situation became violent.  
They took out scissors and knives and shredded up your words,  
pasting the bloody parts  
all over walls.

My favorite wall, stained  
with hot word blood,

the poor words  
all mangled and ripped apart.  
They couldn't even speak and God knows that words cannot  
live long if they cannot speak.

I'm sorry Mr. Bukowski.  
I'm sorry they did that to your words.  
I thought they were nice.