

At the End of Us¹

I bag your groceries. You ask
For one less bag to save
Plastic. We laugh in hope
Less-ness. At your request,
I use that bag to
Double-bag something heavy. We
Don't know what it is.
I'm sure you'll find use for it,
I joke. We keep laughing. I'm full-
Time. You're a regular.
We both do not
Commute here, but try to
Use less plastic bags, laughing.
Sweating. We agree they should
Turn the heat down, without defining
They, or whether we mean the inside
Or outside.

¹ By Prince Bush, published in *Cherry Tree*

To Children Who Ask, Is That a Boy or a Girl²

And parents who say don't ~~answer~~
ask that, and parents who ~~ask~~ answer
through *Jeopardy!* and say who was
or who is, and mostly what
is, what, was;

and parents who hit their children
to apologize for me;

and the humidity and dust
mites among the mold
makes it thunder and rain
inside,

or people who aren't parents
yet look at me and say ma'am
I mean sir and sir I mean ma'am
mustache I mean voice;

and grandparents who keep their grand
kids under umbrellas
with their heads down
to avoid the umbrella;

and those who refer
to that age as Too,
come out whole
through the shredder;

and to Frank, in whose cave
I'm generous
instead of free,

² By Prince Bush, published in *Cherry Tree*

and back
to those children
I have never had
custody for—I create

a shadow
blocking the sun.