

BUSSING OFF

Nine, your hand is still soft as naan.

We're rushing along
and you've got that grinning ahead
look, as though I'm not there,
but you know absolutely I am.

There are the other parents, standing
facing the bus, as though looking to France.

You are going to ski down bristle mats,
the most macho thing in the world!

You scramble onto the bus
and I take my place on the cliff.

You surface right up
by the glass, and wave and wave

then talk and wave
and talk and talk,

and the bus doesn't move.

The teachers huddle and mobiles
come out, the parents turn to each other.

You open your lunchbox and delve...

and I watch you driven away.

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