

*Pantry, 1982*

A box of cereal, stale, ants running  
Up the side, two brown bananas that

He says cleanse the pores  
(If rubbed thoroughly),

An unwrapped chocolate bar  
And a plethora of cans, unopened:

In a locked pantry, Little Maddy sits  
Plucking the stems

Off Granny-Smiths. Just ten more  
Minutes. Maddy, weary, wondering

Just when daddy would come home.  
Time: The pantry is unlocked

And out comes light  
And apples and, lastly, Maddie.

Daddy reaches  
For the two rotting bananas,

Notes can upon unopened can,  
Unwraps the chocolate bar,

Smears chocolate on his fingers,  
Stops, thinks how unlikely it is

For apples to lose their stems.

*A.P. Mendenhall*