

seal. You hold  
your knee as if it were the thing  
blushing, and it will be  
when you move your hand. You  
are so sad: under your chair  
the chrome legs make a cross  
in the air like fingers  
across your heart.

-- Robert L McRoberts

Bristol RI

### The Mixologist

Jamal asked about my father

he was born on a farm  
and lived with his  
eight brothers and sisters  
until he was thirteen  
and ran away with a small circus  
where he followed elephants  
around the center ring  
then became a clown and juggler

years later he almost married  
a woman who swung from a trapeze  
by her teeth but he could see how  
their life together would be

Jamal asked what happened --  
how did he end up in the city  
painting houses  
and grinning shyly  
(hiding his bad teeth)  
when at sixty-two a newspaper  
printed his picture mixing paint

I told her I didn't know

### Wash Out

it rained so hard last night  
I almost became a Jehovah's witness

water poured in between the ribs  
of the patched roof

and gushed through the sashes  
forming a pond where the floor  
is worn in front of the sink

this morning the tractor  
used for repairing the gravel road  
conked out at the bottom of the hill

its operator sat on a front tire  
swinging his legs as he munched  
a soft white sandwich

his teeth were as broken  
as the gears of his rig

he found a cigarette but no matches  
threw the cigarette down  
kicked the tire and cursed  
linking his tractor  
with an act of sexual perversion

I kept walking walking and somehow  
kept thinking of you

-- Franz Douskey

Tucson AZ

### Down Along The Cove

At Albertus Runyun College  
In the days of giant sloths  
There lived a race of people  
Who lived on pumpkin broth

And all their friends  
From miles around  
Would gather when they sang  
For apples, pears, and spark plugs  
And other useless whang

They gave them to their animals  
To kick amongst themselves  
And went back out a-singing  
To line their pumpkin shelves

But somewhere down along the cove  
The dylans lurked with banjos  
And as the pumpkin people passed  
They turned them into mangoes