

RED

The sidewalk buckling up — big trees.
Pretty Mexican boys lolling around
fire hydrants, in front of the Rexall Drug.
Royal Crown cola at the market, and free
comic books to read. Celery
and a certain pink found only in the aprons
of grandmothers.
Soft sculpture streetlamps — a red train running
through town every morning at seven,
a red banner proclaiming the grape festival
I never got to go to.
The red and white sign of Dairy Queen
on the highway
the taste of honeysuckle overgrown and ten feet high.
The pink of daylilies,
the reddish hair of a Shetland sheepdog,
boys in red shirts,
days too hot for red
the railroad tracks
green impossible trees, black walnuts
casketed in their husks
a walk into town
hand-packed ice cream
a lawn, a maidenhair fern, a porch
big enough for sitting,
roses, roses, and bounding into the yard
a wonderful big white dog
named Red.

— Denise Dumars

Hawthorne CA

STANDING IN THE KITCHEN EATING OUT OF A BOX OF LEFTOVER CHINESE FOOD

at dinner with two friends i used
sticks

now i use
a fork