

to another woman,  
we spent last week in Cabo  
trying to unwind  
I took three times the clothes  
I needed  
down there you swim  
or fish or drink a lot  
I don't fish and I can't stay  
too long in the sun  
and one cocktail before dinner  
is all I want  
I guess the trip was worth it  
but I wouldn't go there twice

#### FLAWED EXISTENCE

Speaking from  
a crooked mouth  
I confess to being  
a chronic pessimist

It hurts me nothing  
is ever perfect  
I warn myself  
be on guard  
for pitfalls in Paradise  
should you end there

I carry mousetraps  
to places that haven't  
had a mouse  
in twenty years

I made a roast-beef dinner  
for old friends  
I hadn't seen since 1981  
how was I to know  
they had become  
wild-eyed vegetarians  
and carry sprouts  
everywhere they go

#### DEATH IN A SACRED PORSCHE

Julio had a gnawing fear  
he shouldn't lend  
his holy icon to anyone  
even his only son

Still he never heard it  
was against Canon Law  
so he reverently handed  
it over for a weekend

Not realizing he served  
a very jealous god  
who took his son in  
sacrifice  
and hurled him from a cliff

— Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel

Hanford CA

#### A TRUE STORY (1907)

One day early in the winter, when the first snow was falling, papa found a little chicken in the snow. It had only a few feathers and was about frozen, so he brought it to the house, and when it got warm it was all right.

It got very tame. Every night papa would put it in the toe of his felt boot behind the stove so it would keep warm, and when he started the fire in the morning he would stand up a piece of wood near the stove and put the chicken on it, and it would crow about six times. So we called him "Jim Crow."

At night papa always read aloud from The Daily News, and Jim Crow would get up on his shoulder and pick at his ears and the paper.

When he got to be a big rooster, he was always in the way. So mama said we had better kill him, but we all hated to, so we gave him to my aunt, who lives in a little town near here, and they turned him loose and he wandered up town. And the next morning they looked everywhere for him, and then they asked the storekeeper; and a man that stood nearby, who lived about two miles out of town, laughed and said, "When I was going home last night, a rooster was sitting on my buggy wheel, and when I tried to push him off he jumped in the buggy, so he rode home with me. He must have been the one. I will bring him back tomorrow."

So my aunt cooked him for their next Sunday dinner.

— Elizabeth F. Torrey

Fairbury NE