FOR GERALD AND DAN

it is very hard for someone who doesn't like to be
misunderstood to write short poems take my word for it.

— Mark Begley
Fresno CA

MARK MY WORDS

when the young people in the bar are deriding orange county — its republicans, its bigots, its wealth —
i warn them, "after you have a couple of kids, you may find yourself wishing you could afford to move to orange county."

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

a woman who overhears me say that my daughter's first child was delivered by a midwife says,

"i would imagine that you must have been concerned by that."

"you would imagine otherwise," i say, "if you knew my opinion of the medical profession."

THE FRYING PAN AND THE FIRE

a bright young female friend of mine writes me, concerning gynecologists,

"what sort of man would want to look up a woman's skirts all day every day?"
i see what she means.
on the other hand, what sort of woman doctor would?

DON'T BLAME ME

a newsletter just arrived from women's studies
and, honest-to-god, the lead article is entitled
"busy beavers."

AMERICA FIRST

this morning a toyota pulled aside me with a person appearing to be of japanese extraction in the driver's seat. as the day went on, i noticed hondas, nissans, mazdas, mitsubishi, and isuzus, as well as the toyotas, piloted by persons appearing to be of japanese extraction.

why aren't these people driving american cars? i wondered.

they are americans now — why are they supporting the economy of their ancestors?

after all, i don't drive an irish car. i drive a korean car.

NO WONDER THE ARABS WEAR ROBES

toad considered it a cruel inconvenience of our military leaders asking our servicemen to function for weeks in a "no-fly zone."

HE DIDN'T FEEL A DAY OVER EIGHTY-NINE

the plague cut short the careers of many major talents of the sixteenth century, giorgione, for instance, dead in his thirties, and titian, snuffed at ninety.