

## Crawling on the Devil's Leg

We crawled across the devil's leg as he slept,  
a pistol on the dash beside a stale donut and a magazine,  
open road a stretch ahead of us, past  
a rusty pick-up town with one corner store, gas bar,  
tabs of licorice, loose tobacco and Jack Daniel's  
on a shelf behind the counter where a loaded shotgun leaned.

There were the girls who tagged along, using  
all they had to give, just to get them by, anything  
to get them out from under diapers,  
screaming kids, or worse. So we all  
were searching for something  
better than we had as we reached  
across that leg, listened to his sleeping  
snores, wary, fearful he would wake,  
and we would use that pistol someday  
down the road, grab the cash from the till,  
take the shotgun and more shells,  
head off toward the next flat-tired town  
where in our weakness we'd whet our appetite again.

## The Pick-Up Girl

Out of the longest shadows  
when the road lay looped and black  
he found a girl with a crooked smile  
in the headlights of the car.  
He picked her up.  
She slid into the seat.  
She was lipstick, rouge, long legs  
and cigarettes, slightly tarnished,  
not a lucky coin, and he knew  
he was in trouble when  
she put her bare feet on the dash.  
She flashed some thigh, so he kept  
his eyes on the dark ribboned road,  
the rocks and brush on either side.  
She told him tales of forty pounders,  
mornings naked waking on the grass,  
how she took the cherries off young boys  
and how at night she cried for all the babies  
she'd given up. He knew he could've  
kept her safe, but bought her breakfast,  
left on the table a bit of cash  
and went to wash his hands.  
She took the money,  
hit the road, and found  
another ride.