

ON BEING ASKED TO SIGN AN ORGAN DONOR CARD

My eyes you may have, despite
myopia's handicap,
nearsightedly marvelling at
the strangeness of beauty's light.

My brain you may dissect
to learn the unknown secrets
that buzz along the windowpanes
like colorful summer insects.

My organs of blood and bile
you may take, the ones
that labored hard to expel
all from me that's vile,

but let my heart remain,
buried, it will do you
no good, as it didn't me,
for I've felt and caused much pain.

— Alan T. Jeffries

Shadyside OH

THE NAMES

Our father named us. My mother agreed to it as long as the names were short and different from other names, so our father named us. My brother's came from a football player. He was the quarterback and the high school star when my father was just a boy. He was the one that ran for touchdowns or passed for them. My father admired his vitality and youth. My name came from an older man. He ran a billiards hall. He used to let my father stay there. The babysitter would drop my father off because she had to go home. Then my father would wait, looking at the games of billiards, until his mother finished with work and came to get him. The old man did not say much. He wore overalls and smoked a pipe. Although he was old, my father was not afraid of him. Without doing much, the old man was dignified and kind. He was resilient, like a father would be.