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His Hand

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Monarchs

by Robert J. De Smith

The monarchs are flocking—
Orange lacquered flutterings:

Just the spirit, I think,
Of souls on Judgment Day.

His Hand

by Robert J. De Smith

I.
His hand,
Etched as curiously
As Dürer's *St. Jerome*,
But with motor grime for ink,
Coaxes my shoulder upward:
"I believe you're growing."

II.
As I struggle with a brake shoe spring,
Mysteries of a new tool forcing awkwardness on me,
He tries to make me see:
"You don't want to be a mechanic—
The dirt—the hours—the hurt."
(A can of radiator flush,
Under pressure, once sprayed his eye,
Burning it; the doctor peeled his eye like an onion,
Patched it, and prescribed glasses.)

III.
So here I am—
Repairing participles,
Aligning verbs,
Overhauling paragraphs.
The ink stains my left hand.

When I finish,
I think I'll clean some spark plugs.