

8-]9-79

you haven't changed

your restless youth

still hang thumbs in faded jeanpockets

~~and along highways~~

your hills ^{that} still

wear ~~the same~~ brown, burn^{ed} ~~stained~~ coat in late summer

~~that they work~~ ^{even} back then

the same dense fog blankets those hills at night

~~creeping surreptitiously over valley and harbor~~

~~like the old indiscreet~~ ^{not} lover it's been for years and

like a

that charm remains

you've always had ~~and will never lose~~ 6

I see it in your nighteyes

that still twinkle and wink

I hear it in the hum of your daytime

like a '40's love song,

in the throaty laugh of your land

that quakes suddenly

like a ~~joke~~ ^{dry}

and all stop to listen

and see who laughs first

the newness is, as it always was, your night--

your attraction, wrapped mysteriously about your shoulders,

is your dark velvet cape with starpoint rhinestones,

cool and silky-smooth against my skin

smelling ocean-fresh

though only a star's nod in my direction

I wrap your welcome around me

and feel enticing while I watch you ^{ed} dreamily

you haven't changed

and you know I've sought you out

to see how I have

av. 27 l.

2.3
15
115
23
34.5

36
11
36
36
345
510
345
165

1-12

Cross-Country

We ride the big snake and cross her many times
Yellowstone campers force us onto shoulders
and jagged, comic rock formations tower above
Crusty holes spew geysers and reveal
turquoise-blue and rustcoral-red eyes
to the earth's core
later Teton peaks loom dreamlike and misty
'cross the flat, prairie plain
where rugged fur trappers danced and fought

the Big Gorge ~~sw~~allows the snake
and gives birth to steep canyons and gulches
its edges blown smooth by high winds
that rock the car and and force my
grip to tighten on the wheel

ribbonlike waterfalls and ghostlike cliffs,
giant and lush, line the road ahead
to days of rest before the last push
to the coast and the bay

dust-devils tease dry, loose earth
to climb ~~high to the sky~~
and swirl like quick swallows
only to dash the sand^{like} clouds down to ground
and disappear at its own path's end

we reach "1" and, ~~ponder our progress quietly~~

~~as~~ gulls scan the shoreline

and waves meet the reef and hawks ~~glide over ridges~~

all quests seem natural

and

~~we make~~
we consider
our search

~~seek their sustenance~~

Re-entry

forests of redwoods, tall, stern giants,
remind me of a time I tapped its calmness in another place,
longed for its sun-dappled floor carpeted with needles,
softening my step, my pace, assuring me of peace
their protective limbs screening stark sunlight,
too intense, ~~for unblemished~~, vision too blemished.

(1?)

scrub oak now ~~replace~~ ^{as} white oak and elm
sultry air, ~~and~~ ^{when moist} attitudes, fade
~~as dry~~, ocean-cooled fog heightens senses--

I view hills and options now

where once flat fields seemed to

lead ~~only~~ ^{me} one way

8-1-79

Our marathon ride through Idaho
reveals
by daylight
his prickled chin and dark-rimmed eyes,
my lined face and mussed-up hair

Over eggs we spar
and talk is short.
By our third cup we reach for hands
We splash our faces and brush our teeth
Now, braced for travel,
only arms burn.

With obscure signs and rude, lax drivers
and purple fog
from which we hold our breath,
I yearn for clear views of
snow-capped peaks.

They've stripped the earth of native blood
and placed same on dry, sullen hills
Close heat on land that does not yield
spawn tight minds
where behind cupped hands
they call me
Indian.

Night Drives

Night drives spark challenge:
white line tunnels through darkness,
hard, bright lights prick night sky
as heat lightning floods landscape.

Trucks and campers blink intent;
my beams flash high sign to pass
or to prove low lights are on.
(All mute-talk like this for miles.)

Small towns, like string pearls,
dot horizon and peek over hills and curves
like ocean cruisers in a black sea
that I pass like a ship at night.

Sudden rain pellets my thoughts.
Its freshness flares my nostrils.
My guidelines blur, fade and return.
Wipers wave furiously, then dry road appears.

Air through vents dry my palms while
snacks, glasses, gum litter dashboard.
I blink to stay awake as the
rhythm of the road lulls me, my reverie.

Little Bighorn

Black boy eyes guns while,
in black braids and deerskin,
Crow woman laughs
And I, one lifeline from island strife,
ponder this skirmish between white and red.

We relive this time where soldiers stood
and fought redmen
who counted coup that we now count,
among sage and grass,
as those white stones that pop up
like stunted blossoms.

Medicine Wheel

I saw my life pass as we drove up steep grades
Wide-eyed, I gasped peering down cliffs
out my window.
The car bottomed out on sudden ruts in road--
(envision oilpan punctures
or fire sparked by gas fumes.)
The last ledge found us timid, shaken;
We'd vaulted all obstacles to view you
and unknown fears halt our step.
Yet we hike
in cold, thin air
over rocks
against sunset,
against your stubborn signs.
Encased in fencing, you eye us warily--
In strong wind I hear your voice
ages old
commanding sun to set and wind to moan,
to drive us back to safety and warmth
to lowland earth
where we're welcome.

7.29.79

THE WEST

FROM BELL FOURCHE TO BIG HORN
WE SKIRT SAME MOUNTAIN RANGE AND PLAIN
WHERE OLD COWTRAILS INCENSED REDMEN TO WAR.
HORSE, SHEEP AND STEER GRAZE UNWATCHED NOW
HEADS BENT TO GRASS, TAILS SWISH SKIN
MASSIVE SHAPES AGAINST GREEN WALLS.

FADED MOUNTAINS, DENIM-BLUE WITH PINE
SERVE AS BACKDROP FOR VELVET GOLD HILLS
AND WIDE, LUMPED PLAINS, THEIR SMOOTH LINES
ANGLE SHARPLY WITH CRISP-EDGED OUTCROPS.

FENCE AND PHONELINES, SHAKEN LIKE DUST FROM RAGS,
SPOT LANDSCAPE LIKE THE CUBES OF CRISP HAY
AND CYLINDERS LIKE BREAD DOUGH

DEAD, BLEACHED TRUNKS POINT UP FROM TREE-LINED GULCH —
THE MOUNTAIN FOREGROUND HOLDS
A BROKEN CARS AND SPRAWLING "AIRSTREAMS"
THAT HALT PAN OF VISION LIKE SHINY COPPER ON
GREEN CORDUROY

EROSION SPLITS AND CRACKS ROLLING HILLSIDES
WHILE ABOVE, THUNDERHEADS GRACE BACKGROUND
AND SILHOUETTE ON HILLTOP ONE LONE DEER.
AT NIGHT, SAME CLOUDS WITH SHARP BARKS JERK MY SLEEP.

ANTELOPE DANCE AND PRANCE PLAYFULLY
AMONG BUFFALO GRASS, SAGE AND STRATA
WHITE-FACED STEER PEER FROM BODIES, BLACK AND BROWN
BALEFUL-EYED BULLS PLANT HOOF STOLIDLY ON STEEP HILLS

RED CLAY CLIFFS SEEM STARK,
ABRUPT AGAINST MUTE TONES ~~BELOW~~
AS IF THE EARTH DROPPED
TO MEET RIVERS BELOW.

The nurse entered La Aurora Kth 1/20 1/20

10-30-79

RED MAPLE AGAINST CERULEAN BLUE SKY
HALT OUR STEP LIKE CHILLED AIR—
WIND THEN UPSWEEPS BIRCH LEAVES
THAT SHAKE ASPENLIKE AT OUR PASSING.

ENROUTE TO HILLS WE ^{STOCKED} ~~STOPPED~~ TO UP ON
SLICED MEATS, SOFT DANISH CHEESES + GROLSCH BEERS
TINY TRUCK CHUGGED UP GRADES
FAILING GEARS WHILE ROUNDING CURVES
THRU SCRUB OAK GROVES AND PINES
SPUTTERING AT A VISTA HILL, BEING
YANKED STUBBORNLY FROM ITS BEELINE PATH
DOWNHILL TO ANGULAR CORNERS

FLEET DEER PERK EARS, THEIR LONG NECKS
DIP CASUALLY AS THEY LOPE ACROSS ROAD AHEAD
WE AND TIME LINGER
THEN ^{POINT} TRAIL THRU TALL, COOL PINES
THAT ~~LEAD~~ TO AN OPEN FIELD
THERE THE SUN WARMS US AND THE
THICK THISTLE CARPETS AND THE
WITCH-LIMB TREES WITH ORBLIKE OAK BALLS,
NATURE'S TRINKETS AGAINST STEEP HILLSIDES.

RED POISON GLISTENS FROM BRANCHES EXCEPT ONE
~~ON ONE TREE SERVING AS A LEDGE~~ ON WHICH WE SIT,
SHARING LUNCH, SECRETS + ASPIRATIONS.
BACK IN TOWN WE SIP EXOTIC COFFEE AND
SNACK ON SWEET-BITTER CHOCOLATES
AND BROWSE THRU BARGAIN BOOKS
BEARING US OFF TO HIGHER LANDS OR
LOW, MISTY VALLEYS, ALONG FROTHY RIVERS
OR THRU STRATOSPHERES
ALL ARE DREAMS AS WE ARE SOLIDLY
HOLDING OUR GROUND.