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Agrarians

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Sean Brendan-Brown

Agrarians

She said: four miles east of Hanford
is this fantastic winery castled from sandstone
& cedar. I found an arrowhead in Washtucna
Gorge, how old do you think? Read Neruda
while I drive or feed me—if I swerve who cares?
Why's this silver gauge thing needling red?

I said: drive there faster, we'll check in
get Merlot-drunk & hit the rapids. Arrows
around here are called bird points, not ancient
but very beautiful. I'm sick of Bosoalto, his smug
easy exile didn't kill him as it killed Lorca;
nothing to eat but some spotty bananas. That
gauge's for water temperature—this Jag is pre-
Ford which is why the electric windows
fail but the engine won't boil over.

So we penetrated the universe of agrarians:
wheat, alfalfa, canola, apples, barley, grapes;
Seattle was her home not mine, she was so rich
money was a thing—I'd heard of such people
but thought them made up—as a kid wealth
was god and we its acolytes in passion & blood.
The Jag was mine, a worthless V12 project I'd
rebuilt, repainted, reupholstered; I hoped she'd
destroy it & buy me something new

but it held up. If I were phony like Neruda
I'd describe her as a hothouse orchid fragile
yet rooted and myself the wild weed burnt,
uprooted yet ubiquitous—she called me an angel
as I kissed out her blueblood phobias & infections,
the screech of hulky metal-wheeled waterers greening the sandy windrows.