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Driving through Rain

Stewart Engesser
Denison University

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Driving through Rain

Driving through rain
Away from shadowed rooms with broken furniture
And empty notebooks,
Brightly lit corners
Where the Snakes of Blues tried to tell me jokes,
Away from empty bottles of gin and
Overflowing ashtrays of morning,
I listened to Miles Davis be kind of blue and
Tried to forget the memory of the girl in the
Black and White Photograph
Who sleeps now in circus-light New Orleans,
With a wrestler, no friend of mine.

I was heading to Mexico again, meeting an old friend
Somewhere on the Texas borderline.

We prowled several days last summer
Through Clint Eastwood Guadalupe Desert town,
Santa Elena, Mexico,
Where wind lifted the innocent dust
From the unpaved lonely street
To make us cough,
And the Indian sun grinned down
As shadows, hunched in doorways, whispered,
Asking who the gringos were.

Santa Elena, population ninety-nine,
Where the doorless bar at the edge of town
Rattled
As the wind whipped its sides
And weary angels traded Bowie knives for cheap tequilla

Smoked

And diamond conversation
In the quiet darkness just inside.

I had to smile
As I gained on Memories at seventy miles an hour
Of dusty shacks waiting in the sun.

My friend and I
Would fall on Santa Elena once again,
And play kick-the-can with brown-eyed children smllng...
And Maybe I'd forget about the rain.

Stewart Engesser