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## Scotty--a Sestina (almost)

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Ben Nystrom *Scotty--a Sestina (almost)*

He was always full of energy.  
Friendly, outgoing, forever fast  
talking. Shaking your reluctant hand  
fifteen, twenty times, coming and going,  
slipping your half of his last two cigarettes.  
asking if you'd like to get drunk.

Dangerously impulsive: exploding when he was drunk.  
He sprinted blindly across the street, humoring his energy  
level on the way to get cigarettes,  
then recrossed with an equally nonchalant fast  
pace. He returned safely, but Scotty, always going  
and coming, only had time to shake my hand

before he was reminded by his empty hand  
that his bottle of wine was across the street. He was drunk  
enough to care for a couple of swigs, going  
warm and diluted by backwash. Focusing his energy  
on his forgetfulness, rather than the van going too fast,  
he bolted into an obvious collision. Although his cigarettes

were uncrushed, I offered him my last cigarette.  
His shocked, trembling hand  
was too weak to go digging pockets. As fast  
as a crowd gathered, Scotty proved how drunk  
they made him. Speaking with unbeaten energy,  
"Now I know what a deer feels like." He was going

to be all right. He was still going  
to be the same old Scotty, "Hey Benny. You got a cigarette?  
What a great way to get attention." Feeding his energy  
off their laughter and spectacle, he lifted a scraped hand.  
"Tell the lady that hit me," commanded the slurred drunk.  
"that it wasn't her fault." He always spoke too fast.

I told him I couldn't see. Maybe I spoke too fast.  
"But she was drinking," he hinted, "and she was going  
over the speed limit." If she was drunk  
it didn't matter. I didn't lie for money. "Cigarette?"  
he asked. As always, I set out my hand  
and sat, smoking in quiet, uneasy admiration of his energy.