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To Live and Die in Michigan

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To Live and Die in Michigan

A cool wind blows across wealthy
Carry salt, carry life, carry death and all
But the wind is cool and the people are cold
Brick roads, worn, stretch across East town
Gang bangers and hipsters

Mystic rocks, vegan cookies, brick oven pizza
Or maybe just cigarette smoke
A pack a day, a pack away, death for only a pack a day
But we all know it's worth it in the end

A black car drives across Abbott
Carry boys, carry girls, carry books and pens
See the town as a life form, pulsing
To the beat of some broken kids drum
East Lansing you bellow in air horns!

Their faces were covered in green
They writhe all around
They read page after page
But retain nothing

Sand in streaks across pavement
Wet shoes or worn boots and a wave cap
Packs on their backs they keep steadily on
To find refuge in some ancient dune
Till the sun comes up

Quit moving in waves from me friends of mine
Stop leaving me hear with this mess
What of the pot holed roads of Caledonia?
What of the metal pyramid they built?
There's something to be said about road trips. Isn't there?
I enjoy watching the view whip past us.
I enjoy watching us leave things behind.
I've found you can get a better understanding of things if you see them both front and back.
It makes sense then, how I dislike only seeing one side of you at a time.
I never know what your other half is doing—
who or what you reach for with your hidden appendage.
I keep hearing you tell me you can't breathe when you're with me.
That you need oxygen, that you can't swallow this heavy liquid, but I don’t mind.
In comparison to the size of your mouth your throat is tiny.
There is very little you can swallow.
I have so many appendages that let me grab the things I want to swallow.
So many hooks and barbs and they are all clinging to you.
We have a long trip ahead of us tonight and tomorrow and tomorrow.
I have to hold on tight.

Stephanie Oesch

Blue Whale and Krill Go on an Extended Road Trip

I never trusted a word I didn't say
I can't remember a word that I’ve said
But o' how I trust you Michigan!
You break in my stiff shoes
You broke my first heart
You found my first love
You took my first hate
You held my hand
You pressed my tongue
Suppressed my words
Made room for more pictures
You haunt my thoughts
You choose my dreams
You keep me warm at night
You love it cold outside
I wish and wish and wish
You'd burn and burn and burn
Brightly, forever

I wish and wish and wish
You kept me warm at night
You love it cold outside
I wish and wish and wish
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