



John Tyrell

Bernie Earley

TRAVELOGUE

Wind like a voice told to turn back.
"No," I shouted to the Pennsylvania cold.
Drafts of cold went to the bone,
& so I stopped & drank to music in a bar,
Left for Maryland rain & sleep.
Sleep like tire lines that faded into road water.
Smells of tar, gasoline & oil
Drifted through dreams.

Drove through drizzle to breakfast.
Working men joked in the restaurant.
I read the paper, finished scrambled eggs,
Left for Virginia & more cold rain.
Sky began to open in North Carolina.
Warm wind dried cloths & the road.
Rode till headlights struck my mind to stop.
Reeled with all the miles into sleep in South Carolina,
Sleep like haze the sun shone through to clear blue.

Cruised through Georgia.
Heat hung heavy in the trees.
Road was hot, & my mirage dropped down
Into the Florida deep dark where the moon shone full
& I rode all night with creatures that appeared
in road-craters.
Saw a real egret in a tree at dawn.
Rode on, senses dull as dusty chrome.
Passed an armadillo;
I was not as tough.

Wheels seemed warped to ovals,
Rolling to rest on uneven beach.
Brake-foot boot broke a sand dune.
I detoured the neon ocean motel for a nap,
Plumped head into clouds of purple pillows.

Hallucinated a helicopter, or was it a dragon fly
That scissored, darted away, buzzed back by,
Making me jitter, flinch, slap at sea-wind?
Dozed a moment; woke quick to a water-snake wave
That crept up my leg.

Rode on toward white horizon;
It burst with light & rain.
Roadway glared, a mirror of rainlight.
Drove through it to dry, road-sign numbers:
 200 miles to Miami.

Turned & took the coast road down,
Thriving on sunlight alone,
Aglow with Miami in sight,
Palm trees, parrots in the air.