eric sommer

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econo lodge calculations

Green grass, cropped
butting hard to dark, rigid asphalt
now squeezy soft and nearly fluid
in the ohio
august afternoon broiler
of the econo lodge
parking lot
a blistering sun in a pale blue
cloudless, empty and pitiless vast sky
even the color has been baked out
holiday city, ohio
namesake of a long gone chain
the result of a holiday inn
now long, long gone
and a towing and storage lot
all wrapped up in the
incomprehensible august heat
a heat so shear, so pure
and so merciless that the
heat-hot-air-shimmers
won't even appear for a dance
a few lone cars
the relics of commerce
sound trails echoing from
the hard-by interstate
mixed with the staccato buzzings of a
brave gnat or two
populate this ohio crossroads
on the north indiana border
just past the toll booth
and smothered in the baked smell

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of steamed manure
while the vast cornfields
stretch every which way
in the heat and the smell
the sounds of emptiness
everywhere on a mid-afternoon
so broiled, so baked
there isn't a bird in the sky
just the occasional clink-clink-clunk
of a semi or a tow truck
or a dropped wrench
reverberating on a huge steel
building's concrete oil-soaked floor
over at Hutch's towing
and echoing into the I-beam rafters
and bouncing to and back
between the aluminum walls
desperate to escape
this ohio cooker where it must be
a gods of ohio miracle
anything survives
anything breathes
anything lives
in this
over-heated parking lot baking pan
with manure, a gas station
and an econo lodge motel and
corn for a million and sugar pops and frosted flakes
and not a soul out
in the afternoon
just the relics of commerce
and a few blades of grass
quietly taking notes, recording
their observations