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Poem by Terry Dawson



drive time

when in view the sky
nervously but almost
indiscernibly folds
and unfolds its hands

the sun intermittently
peeing through the lace
of fingers
it's that kind of day

and again I'm driving
it appears I've always
someplace else to be

familiar wire-headed
dead cedar poles and
live oaks with twisted reach
sentinel side-by-side the route
mutely but I'm certain
they whisper into each other's
ears of creosote veneer and
chunky bark: "oh,
him again"

the aging vitreous of both eyes torn
I can no longer drive at night
unrelenting fireworks flash on the periphery
of my vision in the dark but by day
weather remains my faithful companion
as notions—a barrellful trapped in an
undersized cortex—
compete for attention
the shifting firmament
keeps me from greeting up close
one of these stiff
and gossipy soldiers with only
a crumple bumper between us

my internal Google Maps
ticks off the landmarks
I get where I intend to
I attend to what I've arrived for
and turn 'round again
the climate slightly altered
the woody bystanders
the same

to beat the setting sun
I, as if a vampire,
skedaddle like an Atta ant
swallowing tarmac as I rotate the
compost of mental business
my feet rooted to springy pedals
the strands of my head extending
to tickle the cumulus clouds
gleaming now and then
with pissy disposition
as they pray for rain
and then erase the very
idea in a disappearing

Drive Time

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white wave goodbye
home in the nick of time
the glare of day absorbed
into the opposite folds
of my dewy corneas

Art Information

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Terry Dawson produces and performs with the multicultural poetry, jazz, and live-painting collaborative Five Voizz Brush. His poetry, essays, and creative nonfiction have appeared in *Red Fox Review*, *Horizons*, *di-verse-city anthology*, *Pidgeonholes*, *The Courtship of the Winds*, *Dash*, the 2019 Texas Poetry Calendar of Kallisto Gaia Press, and *The Ocotillo Review*. He was a finalist in the Chase Going Woodhouse Poetry Competition and was twice long-listed for the Fish Poetry Prize. He resides in Austin, Texas.

Source URL: <https://mail.talkingwriting.com/drive-time>

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