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Grey/Yellow

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GREY/YELLOW

C. Charles Bley

After too long,
the dot dot dash of highway lines begins to blur
past Atlanta in the night's cool, or hides frozen beneath rumble-strip Nebraska
races ahead to the next cluster of billboard bibles
far-out where art is white-knuckle speed-painting

Somewhere in the stress, on a stretch,
a dollar bill origami crane
floats careless in the serene
blue blotch of windshield washer fluid
on a fast food napkin

Before long the dashboard is a gallery for
ride-hitching fugitive mixed-media,
feathers and stones on a torn-out sheet
of Randy McNally, cigarette butts and lollipop sticks
standing like a forest in the ashtray

And after a whole summer of crossing rivers,
the headliner is tagged end to end
with glow-in-the-dark cave drawings
because it is impossible to lose momentum
laying edgy and awake backseat
under an Oklahoma City overpass

Or once up the Great Divide east of Missoula meandering,
drum solos let fly on every turn after
shotgun shells spilled backseat
underneath and behind everything
because it is impossible to die thirsting for art
in the arms of mountains

Sometimes at the end of the asphalt
laying sore-legged on the hot hood facing sunset
parked in the back lot of some unkempt, neon scar
I am come upon by notions that are breeze-bound dejected spores looking to root,

and then,
taking it by its bone handle,
I hold this knife at arm's length
and trace the clouds as they dim and disperse
while I find my pitch in the cavity
between air-brakes and cricket songs.

