

Why Does Man Exist?

A rust-speckled chicken in a tuxedo,
near Vicksburg, learns to play "Dixie"
on the harmonica. In the desert
of New Mexico twin wooden outhouses
in need of repair stand alone,
with crude stick figures confusing
stray motorists about prior easts
and wests. Near Rochester, New York,
a man carefully lines up shiny cocaine
on a Motel Six mirror. He seeks work.
It will be two years next Sunday
since he's called home or been straight.
A woman curious about her country
rents a balloon outside of Denver
and sees the Colorado break north
toward invisible borders and cattle
shipwrecked by June's heat. Next year
she will skip her high school reunion,
smile pleasantly on Christmas morning,
excuse herself from the carved meal,
kiss dad deeply on the lips, pack
Noxema, No-Doz, and Coors to join
a caravan of former cheerleaders
headed out for Hell's highway,
with no strings attached.