

## *Tucumcari*

Hard folk

out-here, beyond the Texas line -

Sitting at a coffee counter truck stop in Tucumcari

Carved - wind-torn, burnt faces – jaws fixed

indistinguishable - at last - from the landscape

Hard life waitress, pre-dawn shift -

Balancing a world of plates with two-end jobs

Hard load truckers

Eyes squint into the effortless - eying sun -

Years of searing headlights

curve along the scar-fine strip of blacktop -

crossing the day's escarpment without decision

Hard, long-forgotten cowboys -

Gone to herding rigs for the pipeline,

beneath their dusty pickup beds

covers a vulnerability waiting:

Waiting for Jesus,

Waiting for the shift to end - waiting

Waiting for the naming at last to cease

or finally, the Pecos to flow –

Windblown-Ansel Adams-graveyard-snapshot-passing by...

The young evening streetlight crisp moonrise

The hustle-bustle of two young girls serving smiles for tips at the fish fry

their thoughts all a twirl for high school ballers

an offer of a Friday night –

*Thank You, Mam*

text: j. sturgeon 2017

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