

STOPPING IN THE DESERT ALONE

Did you drive 1,000 miles
just to bow your head on your sweaty hands
on the wheel? To memorize every livid vein
like ruckled roads crossing hot desolation
going deeper in the interior?

The interior is what you're running from--
nothing in there worth keeping-- mucked up
with misbegotten cells and superchemicals
that don't know good from bad.
Slash and burn, then poison for dessert.

You sit here, a damaged ecosystem, talking
in your head, pretending to be a woman,
not just an animated logogram for ignorance
posing as medical prowess. When you die
the supertechs will cluck and say:

"Too bad it didn't work this time. Maybe
we'll hit the right combo next time."
And next time is already sitting
in their waiting rooms filling out forms
that lead to filling coffers and coffins equally.

Cut the commentary, girl, you're not the type.
What can they do but try? Some patients get lucky.
Listen, if you've got a few months,
why spend 'em driving? You can still dance, dammit.
You could adagio with that dust devil out there,

what's left of your hair standing straight up--
grit to grind your teeth on
like soft shoe rhythm-- grit to sting you pink
and alive-- enough grit to sand your scars
smooth and touchable as rosewood.

Look at that wild thing dervish around,
winding down now-- slow spins-- almost graceful.
How strong is it? Could it lift you
like a ballet partner? If you cover your eyes
and nose could it hurt you?
Actually-- could anything?