

1945

Desert Highway

Helen Scales

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FIVE POEMS

DESERT HIGHWAY

The beamed light creates the terror.
 Amalgamated with moon and alkali
 it thrusts from the blackness
 the slow-moving glacier blocking the highway.

As you wipe the moisture from your forehead
 listen
 to the sweet familiar music the motor hums
 and tighten your fingers around the wheel's rim.

You are in a strange country,
 encompassed by a steel frame,
 unarmed against macadam's treachery
 of grey and fluid waters
 and the fields of snow where no snow ever falls
 and the hill of ice.

POEM

Heaven cannot find you.
 Here the roots enfold you,
 There the walls enclose you
 Who asked none to bind you.

Enemies will take you,
 Pain and anguish break you.
 There was none to warn you
 Heaven would forsake you.

Space is all around you.
 Earth and air will bring you
 Facsimiles of songs you
 Heard before time drowned you.