

Eagles and Highway 99

by Cynthia Briscoe

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*They confirmed my knowing, before seeing,
The illuminated sentinels
Atop the ancient tree trunk bearing triceps
And weather-tapered forearms
Devoid of digits and palms.*

*Generations of their people had paused there,
Having stored the memory of respite in those awaiting arms.
Serenely scanning the rich green expanse
For potential movement of flesh skirting
Amongst bobbing volcanic cinders dusted with lichen.*

*Somehow I knew they would be there
This day of the year, amidst this conflagration of coincidence
Narrowed into their sharp sights.
The unmistakable beacon of white heads flashing
And black bodies glistening against a verdant backdrop.*

*Like two tuning forks,
They hummed a language called Wind
That shook loose neglected cobwebs attached to death,
A shrouded scarf to be sucked out the half open window
And blown about the highway shoulder.*

*I prayed to them at sixty-five miles per hour.
Grant me clarity of your vision
To see beyond diminished branches
And meadows flagged with red survey markers.
Spirit me to the land of timeless travel and gracious wisdom.*

*Oh Eagle, the drum of my heartbeat
Takes flight with your journey,
It surpasses the horizon and waves of vast oceans.
Carry me away on your dark wings
Into the sun's brilliance.*