

2014

## And there were cul-de-sacs as far as the eye could see

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### Recommended Citation

Jordan, Brendan (2014) "And there were cul-de-sacs as far as the eye could see," *The Oval*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 2 , Article 21.  
Available at: <http://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval/vol7/iss2/21>

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## AND THERE WERE CUL-DE-SACS AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE

**Brendan Jordan**

Beyond Limon, Colorado, there's a field I waited for.  
It grew emerald in the velvet of April's first  
reluctant skies: the August startled me, burnt gold like  
a mudflat and waving curious sea, spitting up  
seedpods instead of foam,  
and in Arizona, which I do not remember, but for hotel  
balconies pierced by the glow of exit-ramp LED,  
separated from the sandstone spires  
that circle wordlessly in a purple dusk beyond the city—  
when we stare out at them, leaning jittery elbows  
on railings too tall, the nighttime fell like a curtain  
and the television called, an overworked father,  
to lull us with stolen images of colorful birds  
that somewhere traverse floodplains, a carpet of wings rolling up  
into the dusty storage bin of extinction.  
When the waves take us,  
our graffiti can scream fuck you in neon,  
rage with stylized Marxian fists painted neon  
green, and still the bricks of the alley  
will admit graciously the ocean to devour them.  
The rail platforms will be empty, dismembered knots  
of wire flicking blue sparks as the metal antennae  
of abandoned traincars wave uselessly in the gale;  
and somethings will be left,  
orange sunhats dropped like spare change into gutters  
and beloved how-to manuals left fluttering, broken insects  
sitting baffled on iron tables in deserted plazas.  
Someone will tell you, "I told you so."  
Someone will pray beside a man who counts the last

dollars he could pilfer from the bashed-in ATM,  
and folds them up again, stuffing the once-current-  
cy under the leather tongues of chapped boots.  
Meanwhile, trucks loaded not full enough with plastic jugs  
of purified water roll into trembling neighborhoods  
and woolen blankets rain from helicopters like odd manna  
falling in trampled lawns:

We were all born here,  
the suburban cloister where brick-walled  
shopping malls rise like steeples, lifting the holy  
beacons of neon logos, interchangeable halos  
tossed like discus out of heaven.

Our children prefer to chop the pixelated arms off zombies  
with their y-button chainsaws they won in the last  
level—there was a time we preferred  
that they stole the magnifying glass from the puritanical studies  
of serious fathers, and trotted out to the yard  
to blast the blueish armor of beetles till they burst  
into puffs of Fourth of July smoke. This  
has always been the flag they pledged too,  
why eighteen-year-olds who fret about acne  
and store gin in their winter boots make better  
soldiers, who see the desert through the red filter of a scope  
and come home with swelled arms and trigger fingers  
for kisses. They taste white phosphorous in the shredded wheat  
and drum rhythms like a rain of debris against the countertop.