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Seen Walking Between Here and Janesville

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Roger Sheffer

Seen Walking Between Here and Janesville

Ward hauls his belly from the fold in the earth
a dozen ears of corn in a wet Red Owl bag.

He eats it raw.

His clothes hang loose and the semis
like to suck the shirt off his back and spit
it out a mile down the road. He's
been seen walking baretop a mile
outside Janesville
tracking down that shirt.

He's been seen barefoot sitting on the shoulder
picking his toes. In a rainstorm. The
Jackrabbit bus thumps on a patch of asphalt. On snowy
days the driver sets the wipers on double-time
and sings some kind of off-key lament for
that poor soul until the road curves twice
and Ward turns white
in that general forgetfulness of
everything we've seen
out these fogged windows.