

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 38 *CutBank* 38

Article 19

Summer 1992

Winter Road

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Recommended Citation

Galvin, James (1992) "Winter Road," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 38 , Article 19.

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James Galvin

Winter Road

The reasons the winter road acts so crazy
Are all invisible now.

The summer road persists
In reasoned argument,
Reducing terrain to topography,

Curving gracefully to the left,
Or bending gently to the right,

Gaining, falling, abstracting
Rises, draws, outcrops, woods.

The winter road is crazy.
This time of year it seems
To slam nihilistically

Against the ridgetside,
Sidle through unlikely groves,

Make esses where the summer road goes straight,
Crossing and recrossing,

It dodges to the left, leaps to the right,
A road out of control.

In winter how a road should go
Is told by contours of atmosphere.

The landscape is just a situation
Of windbreaks and wind-permissions.

Heedlessly the summer road
Dives into broad drifts.

It surfaces a couple of times
Between white waves,
Then goes down for good.

Now the winter road is smart to seek
High ground, exposed to the wind,

To thread the drifts
Like big white corpses on a field.

Come winter this road proves amazing.
All along it was
In the right place,

Already leaping to the left,
Dodging to the right,

Sailing through contours of atmosphere,
Prophetic and dumb.