

# CutBank

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## Yaw

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John Starkey

## Yaw

Leo listens to Gretchen chatter  
about a room full of nuns  
rehearsing church tunes  
in the room adjacent to hers.  
The blender mixes a tankful  
of frozen daiquiris. On stage  
a woman sings "You'd Be So Nice  
To Come Home To." Leo taps  
the beat on the window  
as Gretchen, in black tights  
and leather boots, turns  
the neon sign on and off.  
The racing green convertible pulls up.  
Leo hesitates, then gets in.  
The convertible slashes  
a path down some seaway road.  
He pushes his head back,  
lets the wind ruffle his hair.

The car phone rings. His mother asks  
where he's been. She waits  
next to his father's hospital bed.  
Before he can say he's on his way,  
the convertible pulls onto the ferry,  
headed for the Island.

The car phone rings. Gretchen asks  
where he's been. She waits

in the motel bar. The band plays  
"Flight Of The Bumblebee."  
The woman sings "Summertime."  
The cooler sounds like a blender,  
the beer tap rings like a telephone.  
The rum bottle pours like a request  
from Leo's mother to come and to  
come quickly. The racing green  
convertible waits in the Steamship  
Authority parking lot. Leo  
doesn't hesitate, parades  
down some steely seaway strip.  
A hearse disguised as a police car  
pulls him over, four nuns wheel  
his father's coffin to the driver's  
side window and sing "Yahweh."  
The driver closes the top.