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Internal Combustion

Chris Weidenbach

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CHRIS WEIDENBACH

INTERNAL COMBUSTION

A man who ran out of gas
walks beside the road at midnight
carrying a styrofoam cup
of unleaded-plus.
It's a long walk and
noticing the big dipper
the man forgets himself
lifts the cup to his mouth
and takes a drink.

Eight white high school boys
crowd into a '69 Catalina.
A boy in the backseat says
"we fuckin look like Mexicans"
and the boy driving says, "no
we're just fucking poor."

This guy down the street
does one kind of body work
fixes bullet holes with putty.
People find his house
by looking for the mailbox
with shot bullets welded on
to make a smiley face.

My friend's favorite joke:
you find a lane lined both sides
with orange construction barrels
and late at night move each pair

successively closer together
until the lane disappears.

Two girls steal a construction marker
and one takes its blinking light home.
When the blinking won't let her sleep
she covers it with blankets and clothes
even puts it in a drawer
but it blinks and blinks
like a heart beating
so she takes it to the backyard
and murders it with a brick.