

Black Nemo

Okkervil River

Meriden months stuck in Indian summers. And Dad's on the line, but I'm fine. "Here's the phone..." Oh, it's floating away. It's going away on the tide. Crystalized wishes, like kids crying for Christmases, ticking off lists with their pens in their fists before floating away, and going away on the tide. Running away on the back of a beast, in a midnight charge down a broken beach. The little stars, they spin the sharpest shards of light on down to the mouth of the sea. In a morning curled up in a cab on the edge of the world, the light's a fire of gold lying around.

What, when you heard it - say, forward or furtive, transferred through a person or mystical blur - got you going away, got you floating away on the tide? Through Bonner Road basements of "Pitfall," of cave-ins, of crackling tapes, cross fades... When the song ends I'm going away, floating away on the tide. Finding your way down the bloody beach, with the burnt-out cars salt-licked by the sea, those slicked-out stars all screaming from a distant high remove. In the fizzed-out snow of a cathode screen I saw a broken ghost in an old soap scene. I let his dead and dreamy eyes follow my moves.

And I had a vision of everything hidden but always around me. It fought me. It found me while going away, floating away on the tide. Shooting through time with my eyes getting glassy and lined, while I watch seasons rocketing past me. They're going away - a little more every day, all the time.

On a balcony, at the brilliant sea where all rivers meet, a voice spoke to me and said, "These things have just got to be. I don't know why."

And I said, "Here's to the freeway flasher! Here's to the desperate dasher. Guard him. Keep him from crashing, on his tear. I know you think you miss him. I know you think you knew him, but you were passing through him. Light as air he's leaving. There ... he's gone."