

1979

Untitled

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Cover Page Footnote

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I could hear your voice drawling
into the phone
your mouth half-forming words
with the difficulty of a two year old
and through the (however many) miles
that exist between here and L.A.
I could see your body
half-slumped over
in a phone booth
on a corner somewhere
probably next to the Seven-Eleven store
or under the Hertz Rent-A-Car sign
blindly pressing buttons
till my voice was at your ear
pleading with you to confess
whatever foreign problems
you really didn't want me to know
but you say the money is good
so nothing else matters (as)
your solitary secret
creeps over the wires
silently
I know you are inventing conversations again
painting pictures of your grand illusion (that's you)
your loneliness is killing you
your motorbike is smashed to pieces
and my face
is scarring your common sense

moments of hot silence
I wait
listening for your voice
to explode into the wires
in another round of
pleas for my trust

but the silence grows longer
and cools with your madness
withering with the reality of
an operator's monotone

you breathe deep
and as if the cool evening air has cured you
say goodbye
bleeding endless illusions of strength
over the wires

—Nancy Cuminale