

2013

# Breakdown of a Truckdriver

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### Recommended Citation

Gottlieb, Arthur (2013) "Breakdown of a Truckdriver," *Studio One*: Vol. 38, 15-16.

Available at: [http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/studio\\_one/vol38/iss1/15](http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/studio_one/vol38/iss1/15)

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## Breakdown of a Truckdriver

All day I deadhead West  
hauling my empty refrigerator rig  
like a long coffin.

At dusk the road throws curves  
I can't catch. Cat's eye  
reflectors leap from railings  
to claw me blind.

Knuckles gripping the wheel  
go white as ten ghost skulls.  
I double clutch my gut  
to get over the last hill,  
hoping home will loom somewhere  
in the final stretch.

When an outburst of brights  
from oncoming cars hit me  
head on, I pull in to this  
lonely truckstop motel.

Here I have nothing  
but the past to look forward to.  
Millions of miles under my belt  
knot my stomach into unlucky  
concrete cloverleaves.

The vacancy sign still beckons  
with a whore's wink as I drive myself crazy up a wall,  
cracked into a thousand plaster  
maps, ribbons of road unwinding  
in my rearview mirror, turning me,  
like a speedometer, back to zero.

All the ground I've covered  
just a mound of dirt now  
in a dream of me, buried bones  
with only an ambulance siren crying  
on the cold shoulder of the road,  
its red cross my grave's solitary marker.

-Arthur Gottlieb  
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