

# The Greatest Public Works Program

by Laurel Snyder

## **The Greatest Public Works Program**

You're passing  
some shitty little  
town lost along  
the drear interstate.

In a dim afternoon  
downpour—  
with no gas, no  
phone, no family.

Windows open  
because the car.  
Because the fogged  
windshield hates you.

Wet and watching  
your map lift suddenly  
from the dash, whip  
through a slick window,

away, away, away,  
sodden, useless, gone  
forever in the gray  
*been left behind—*

And that's the moment  
you face the road,

the constellation of  
*ahoy and already,*

see the map waiting  
beneath your tires.  
That's when a swell, a rising,  
the promise of there.

That's when you know  
ahead will be else, other,  
at least not *here*. Maybe  
even dry, with coffee.

That's when, driving  
on fumes, tired  
past gone, you notice  
the sky pink up.

The rain lifts, clouds  
scatter, and you suddenly  
remember—Hope  
has no rearview,

can't live in memory.  
Hope wakes starving  
in the storm,  
to off and hunt.

