

Driving Home at Midnight

by Michael Gillan Maxwell

Driving home at midnight, on a night so dark, so wild. Headlights can't pierce the gateway to oblivion. Moon and stars peek out through storm clouds. A black hole in the dead of night, swallows all light back into itself.

The same late night DJ on two different stations, a millisecond apart. Dense, bone grinding death metal pulses from speakers. Through static and white noise I twirl the dial between stations & control the flow of time.

A jazz trio recorded live in a club more than fifty years ago, somewhere in America. Trance rhythms, thunderous bass and drums, strident horn, double harmonic, Byzantine scale. A man plays a horn in an open-air market, eyes closed & cheeks puffed out, charming a dancing cobra out of a basket.

Driving home at midnight on a night so dark, so wild. Lightning flashes, bleaching the landscape in stark white on black. Tree branches sway in delirium. Time is spinning, tumbling through the howling void.

In another life I ride a sway-backed horse on a curvy, tree-lined path, clods of earth kicked up by hooves, frock coat whipping in the wind. I'm lashed to the wheel of a creaking, wooden ship on storm driven waters, running hard before a gale.

Driving home at midnight, on a night so dark, so wild. I'm the only traveler on the road, a voyager in deep space, the last man on earth, listening to jazz on the radio in the dark.

