The Way Back Home

by Michael Gillan Maxwell

500 miles all the way from Omaha

nine hours on the back of a flatbed truck buffeted by hot wind that thrashed our bodies tied our hair into knots sucked the air right out of our lungs & ripped the voices from our lips we rolled on past fields of wheat and corn sov and hav the endless midwest landscape swallowed up by prairie and sky a spool unreeling, a banner unfurling time and space unwinding we played chess on a tiny magnetic board until you called checkmate about six hours out somewhere just past Des Moines