

## Wilderness House Literary Review 9/1

*Matthew Conley*  
**second day**

1 I don't like groups of cars  
2 being surrounded by cars  
3 car groups on the highway  
4 worrying about the drivers  
5 worrying if they see me  
6 to switch lanes worrying  
7 I get a blow out or switch  
8 I position myself between  
9 the group ahead ahead  
0 the group behind I keep  
1 a good number of meters  
2 behind the group ahead  
3 and maintain speed some  
4 break from the group behind  
5 speed up and approach  
6 just one it always passes  
7 but a group I speed up so  
8 slightly to encourage them  
9 to speed up they get close  
0 I slow down they all pass  
1 and form the next group  
2 up ahead I don't look at  
3 them I don't look at the  
4 drivers the drivers are all  
5 comfortable with groups  
6 if the group ahead is too  
7 slow I speed up to pass  
8 find an empty road pocket  
9 I slow down so slightly  
0 to maintain distance tell  
1 the highway patrol officer  
2 I only speed until I find  
3 an empty pocket groups  
4 of cars groups of cars

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### Honesty Policy, Alternate Version

Everyone knew I'd get married, no one knew I'd marry a good woman. I can say that now, I was a good looking young poet, I liked to laugh, I was good at it. They knew I'd marry a thief, a gallon of milk, not because of my girlfriends but because of my history. And she likes me to read her poems, my own, not. At some point I figured out that she would predict the end by my body language, I would start to look up, stir, shift, she'd add a small moan of approval as if she knew just how this poet was going to wrap up the thought for good, how long was I amazed that she felt it before me! The poet! I began smoothing my voice, regularizing it, still she hit it bone. One day on the couch we sat with Niedecker, a shifty mind if ever there was, and short, God how short her darts! But I was uncomfortable and shifted 3 bars in and that moan! Good Shark, she hit it right on cue! It was that lightning. Next time when I sat stiff, through a long William Blake, long past the end, she cleared my silence from her throat. So that was that, then. Certainly nothing to hold against her; she's no thief, she's lactose intolerant.

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### tom waits' never-used discard c- or d- side

maybe not Americana enough  
or maybe too, too trope-y, does that brain  
consider

garish? maybe

the loop was too perfect, or the story  
left no room for bulletholes, or  
there was room but no hat-topped policeman bit

that barrel. where must it not go to  
seem too far or short for  
the ticket taker in the blood?

& not exactly callous, but not exactly  
emotional either, a crumb too small for any  
but the mouse that don't care no that's not it

tom waits' never-used discard c- or d- side cannot be  
categorized by any citizen made  
of dust, the gold that pre-

dated Midas held no magic  
except the intrinsic, no mystery  
that whiskey could carry past the moon

but I'm not talkin bout the bland,  
good young tom must have chucked about  
a billion of those

nor the too obscure, less numerous  
in the long eye rumblin from the thick  
machine throat no I'm talkin bout

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the wild ones, the wildest one,  
what still had a narrative & a street name  
a nostalgia for repetition but  
something inhuman, some thing that  
even  
turnin the page upside down couldn't shake

loose