

## Endless Steel Conga Line

Written by Administrator

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the car inches painfully down the yet new freeway  
in the Atlanta morning traffic  
the already out-dated new highways swollen with vehicles  
driving to work  
this daily pilgrimage inviting not so much frustration  
as moments to reflect.

young, climbing executives in dull, dark suits  
played bumper cars with construction workers in hard hats  
each shifting for position as if there was a prize  
at the end.

mounds of smoke rose from the thousands of exhaust systems  
pouring waste into the belly of the city  
industrial towers exploding into the morning sky  
in concert.

blue cars, green cars, black and green cars, cars with dents, new cars, old cars, small cars and  
huge cars shimmying their blue-blooded vinyl-topped price tags  
passed the poverty of the projects.

I never drove  
even when we went on long trips he did it all  
blind in one eye, bald and less than healthy from living years with daily insulin  
he was the driver  
whether on a thousand mile trip to college  
or daily wagon-train-like caravans to work  
it was his position as head of the household to drive.  
he held the wheel firmly just the stone-steel way I imagined him  
never privy to the insecurities that must have been within.

the little green car with its dash-mounted fan instead of air conditioning  
spoke of frugality and restraint  
the fan spinning waves of hot air into the fall morning.  
padded dashes were new and this was his single surrender to decadence.  
With the sensitivity of an artist and the mind of Einstein  
captured in the life of a commoner  
struggling to feed his family  
he had the intellect, instincts, introspection and uniqueness  
reserved for a species bred to be the prime cut of man  
the specific filet of soul that put him outside the usual.

out of his medium in the business world,  
he trucked his body down this noisy highway

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to fulfill mundane tasks reserved for others less gifted.

down passed the narrow lanes passed Georgia Tech  
and its hive of buzzing students  
passed the Varsity  
(you must be from Atlanta to appreciate this rite of passage to manhood)  
and into the downtown only barely recognizable today  
with the tedium of work at the other end.  
it was the way one never wanted the registration into a hospital to end  
because then one had to face admission.

at the other end of this snail's parade was lifting  
one hundred pound potato sacks  
with an hundred and twenty pound body  
and feeding endless cartons of cigarettes to be stamped.

I had visions of my future  
none of which I believed  
filled with glamour, passions  
and adventure.  
no where in these dreams was sweat  
fatigue  
and long, dreary muscle aches.

I always rode with my knees against the padded dash  
and my head uncomfortably tucked into my chest.  
Occasionally he spoke  
"homosexuality was a disease."  
why was he telling me this? I knew even then that I was not gay  
but I listened to him  
not for what he said  
but for the sweet music of his voice.

If only he had lived long enough to see that I had worth  
yet I really know that I don't  
even if I posture to the world otherwise.

Now if only I had just a moment from these boring rides  
to help me deal with old age.