

Migration

I've
heard it's
pretty, this
paved-over swamp.
I ask you: stinging
gnats, kudzu-enshrouded
dogwoods, blue laws, debutantes,
hundreds of miles between paintings,
yellow-dawg conservatives, sewer
stench befouling stagnant air? —What about
the Ventura Freeway in August
at four miles an hour, the morning
toxicity forecast, art
shows where we look for our-
selves in the glass, beach-
impetigo,
and earthquakes?,
you ask
me.
—Ninety
museums,
Venice Boardwalk,
the Flower District,
eighty-six languages,
Korean soap operas,
Malibu dissolving into
red Pacific sunsets, that break at
Hermosa, Tom Waits at the Pantages,
need I go further? —Sawhorse tables,
bonfires, old boys swapping tall tales
in raunchy Gaelic fashion
over beer and oysters
we gathered beside
herons fishing
the green banks
of Mad
Creek.

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