Dudley Saunders, Gutter Broke

the gutter broke the rain washed down in a sheet across the window her kids were sleeping in the booth

she stared him down he stared her up his saucer filling from his spilling cup 'you speak to me boy I wanna hear the truth' a bleach job flashing roots

while the brake-lights backed up to her face washed in red from screaming brakes he missed his brake in a mistake, boys but she never breaks her gaze 'woman someone's waiting up for you he loves you and just look at your kids' 'you don't talk to me about my kids don't you talk to me'

well I could load them up behind the seat rock 'em in the engines heat with these rumble-lullabies that I find sweet go chicago up to buffalo right down through new orleans moving kind of slow but slick as sweat that grease all these guys inside you don't you know oh don't you know'

she pets her children in face black fingerprints left in her wake her mouth keeps moving but there ain 't a word that I can hear her say just 'what's gonna happen to me what's gonna happen to me what's gonna happen to me to me to me to me'

the night keeps yawning in the south something walking in her mouth disappearing in the yaw take this bone out of my jaw a white line painted down her back her children catching in the cracks while every truck rocks down her night down her night the dream and light turn til they're turning inside out turning down the devil's route like turning chambers in a gun turn to a full or empty one look mama's here look mama's gone looky mama looky mama looky mama looky what you done

this is a story about a man named Joe whose eyes said yes but whose head kept shaking no kept shaking it kept shaking he wants to sleep but her eyes are waking 'take my clothes girl take my money you knew he was mine you knew he was funny'

ah but that poor boy does know that her sleeping kids will not wake up that she's drinking from an endless cup the fork keeps moving to her mouth but never never will she sup 'what's gonna happen to me' 'ah girl it done happened' 'boy you tell me the truth' 'you know the truth" " I said tell me the truth' 'I said tell me the truth'