

Ellis Paul, Tornado Girl!

Sandy has seen a tornado more times than she's seen the grateful dead...
She lives in Oklahoma,
Where the storms come prairie fed,
And the numbers keep on mounting,
It's been twenty times and counting
That she's been in the path of
Splintered trees and twisted lead
That connect the dots between trailer parks
With destruction that's painted blood red

And now she wants to chase them,
With me, in my Honda Civic,
"we'll keep a safe distance."
I say, "give me an instance
Where 'safety' is mileage specific..."
Okemah is where the last one touched down,
(that's Woody Guthrie's old home town) and,
(as if it would turn me around)
She starts singing "this land is your land"
I say, "ok, you win.....terrific."

Now, I've never been to see something
That I wished wasn't even there,

Though I've heard that said of dentists,
And with in-laws, and from victims of the electric chair
But there I was, heading east on 44,
Getting pelted by hailstones the size of barn doors
So, of course, none of them were missing..
It was as if God was keeping score,
And the heavens were thundering their approval...
That's when I suggested our hasty removal

Just a mile down the road, this rain of hailstones ceased
And a vacuum of silence brought a turbulent peace....
The clouds started dancing, dressed up in taffeta green
And enveloped the sky in a jungle party theme--
There they gave birth to a barbed-wire wind
Sandy was frozen, her face had a maniacal grin,
A funnel cloud came roaring, cast down from the sky
Like the knife of the devil but twenty stories high!

Sandy broke from the car in a mad, desperation run
To touch her sole fixation, this wheel where death was spun,
And I could do but nothing, my heart came so undone
For the host of twenty tornadoes,
Who died with twenty-one...