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#2

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Dead End, Texas

M.J. Scott

out where the sand inhales
 paling bones from the boiling surface
 kissing the flats of scorpions' feet
 and caressing their empty stomachs

where unbearable torridity
 are just handsome words in abusive affairs
 tempting the stewed gazers
 to dream of being anywhere that is elsewhere

where the land takes shade
 chasing the waking snakes from bathe
 and grim masses in the sky bring
 gnarling howls that warn their prey

where barbed wires cloaked in rust
 slither across dying prairies parched in dust
 and what once bore the colors of a pretty gown
 is now just hollow thorns within rolling brush

where the night sky shyly bats its eyes
 to the weary whistlers of a long traveled tale
 who lie on scorched earth under blankets of dirt
 in graves where violent stars once fell

#2 Christopher Zhou