

5-1-2020

## Anaconda, Montana: December, 2011

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### Recommended Citation

Harrell, Jonathan (2020) "Anaconda, Montana: December, 2011," *Forces*: Vol. 2020 , Article 8.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.collin.edu/forces/vol2020/iss1/8>

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**Anaconda, Montana: December, 2011**

Jonathan Harrell

I got in my car and drove to the Montana Rockies and stood  
in the Clark Fork. It was along that red riverbank  
that I drank rain from a canteen and ate ostrich jerky.  
No, that's not what I did. That's what I would have done  
if I hadn't gone out for groceries. For five days in a row,  
I would have camped there alone. Truth is I have never  
even heard of ostrich jerky.

The sound of the water passing over the gully, well,  
the gutter of my house, is all the romance of loneliness I need.  
The half-mile trip to Wal-Mart is all I've got of good enough.  
So let's call the EXXON sign a blue-ridged mountain  
and when I look back past the smelter  
at Smoke Stack State Park, the police  
and the rainclouds are an unruly Ash tree  
and a black pickup truck some big, strong  
ranger drives. Here out in the Rockies,  
here out in the backyard, I'm always heading back  
to the lookout. Look, see the bobtail, how the Toyotas  
break even over the horizon?

That's just a part of this Midwestern mysticism.

These woods here are my wood blinds, the green light  
a tornado on my meadow's lip. I say howdy, head to the kitchen  
and reverse all the way back home, to a keyboard,  
to a stream of smoke from a stick of  
homemade incense.

And I think to myself I will start taking things apart.  
I will start washing myself in the river.