

ENTERING PUCKERBRUSH, ARIZONA AUGUST 2005

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Honorable Mention, Poetry

POP 28, ELEV. 4280

Let me take you there, somewhere between *Lost* and *The Middle of Nowhere*—to Puckerbrush, where morning sun burns like a searchlight through shade of sagebrush. Along Interstate 80, dust devils chase a neon rainbow between 18 wheelers. Car horns honk out-of-tune, like bronchial geese trying to fly in straight lines. A truck stop welcomes lonely truckers to fuel up, eat beans in a skillet, dip hot biscuits in gravy, have another cup of coffee. Under a cold shower, a rookie driver sings a “*somebody done somebody wrong*” song.

Home is a 40 year old trailer surrounded by wrecked cars, barren dirt, broken bicycles, forgotten dreams; and tomorrow looks no better than yesterday. A pink house slouches by the railroad tracks. Faded curtains wave to customers. Ageing *Ladies* wear cheap perfume, have bright red lips, tease their hair. They still have “it”...it’s just re-located.

79 miles West of Puckerbrush, Hot Springs taunt travelers with sizzling steam rising from the belly of the devil. History has no face in the desert where bleached bones are trampled into ruts made by covered wagons. Let me take you where nothing can be taken from nothing; and time stands still listening...for the long, lonesome whistle of the distant train.