Chill Factor

Debra Marquart

Iowa State University, marquart@iastate.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/engl_pubs

Part of the Poetry Commons

The complete bibliographic information for this item can be found at http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/engl_pubs/164. For information on how to cite this item, please visit http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/howtocite.html.
Chill Factor

Abstract
sometimes at parties in moorhead my friend's late night rambling hushed as if fearing microphones in the
walls crazy talk....

Disciplines
Poetry

Comments
Chill Factor

sometimes at parties in moorhead
my friend's late night rambling
hushed as if fearing microphones
in the walls crazy talk
about what was buried
in the countryside up north
everyone gone from the party a few of us
slumped deep in couches
blowing smoke rings

the night's music playing on repeat
the cup from the keg's last beer
warm in our hands my friend would begin
the story again it never varied
about the late night drive up north years ago three am
twenty below outside the chilblain night
the darkened eyelids of farmhouses

inside the car the radio playing soft rock he said
the DJ's distant voice the heater blasted
yet the windshield stayed cold
to the touch above the full moon
hung large and bright he said
so illuminating the icy fields
he could drive without headlights
lunacy really what he says came next
on the horizon he told us
a sparkle of light broke in the distance
from an aperture a timid crack in the earth
something heavy opened a beacon
spreading in the night then a nose emerged
soundless a tip a slim column lifted up revealed itself
foot by foot a minuteman pulling clean from its shell
like a needle unthreading itself
sparks followed soundless lifting in a spitting arc
then growing small out of sight lost among the stars

he says he barely kept the car on the road
he said his hands spun the radio dial
through talk and jazz
all the late-night-preaching about salvation
fire and brimstone end-of-days revelation
he says he scanned country pop rock
white noise up and down
he searched for news of impact
waiting to hear what part of the world would fall silent
but only the chatter continued all night

he criss-crossed and circled the dial he said
he knew he didn't know he said he couldn't say
what he had seen that cold winter night
in the middle of nowhere
he drove the backroads until dawn
waiting for the world to end