



1991

Between Here and Verdi, Nevada

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Recommended Citation

Hemming, Jill (1991) "Between Here and Verdi, Nevada," *Inscape*: Vol. 11 : No. 2 , Article 12.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape/vol11/iss2/12>

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BETWEEN HERE AND VERDI, NEVADA

by Jill Hemming



We would have stolen
the motel ashtray
and crossed the border,
but the car broke down,
slid into a ditch
and imbedded itself
in dirt and glass,

and stumbling we followed
the edge of highway
to the next dried-out town,
sprung like a weed
scattering worn-out beds
at ten bucks a night.

Inside, the vanity
lit like a circus
row of orange bulbs;
we stood ourselves
in the glass
and sucked in our cheeks
to hollows

I N S C A P E

and desecrated
the white covered cups
with a toast to
the sanitary three bars of soap,
to the shampoo, lotion,
and empty ashtray,
all lined up
like a bathroom nativity,

and dizzy, we waltzed
to the vibrator bed
where I lay and dreamed
of sedans floating down
on big, bubble tires
with window washer fluid
arching like rainbows
into my hands, my parched hands.