Indiana Toll-Road Freestyle

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Between the grieving and Chicago
                                    like a toggle,
on and off, and on,
                   and often on
the brink
         of sink-
                 ing, thinking
nothing up ahead except the Land of Lincoln,
working out a whole code,
                           a toll-road
                                       hermeneutics,
as I soloed
           up and down the route, its
every mile marker
                   starker,
                           darker
with intention, than the time before,
                                    I came once more
to mile twenty-four
(which signified a dignified retreat from your
                                               embrace,
your grace,
            to places
faceless,
         flat,
              matte,
                    mapped,
and faintly sordid
                  as this stretch of Portage
was) and chanced
                  to glance
up through the windshield at a falcon,
                                        talcum-
white against the blue,
                       and knew,
whatever else the outcome,
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that the length

and strength

and welcome

of the interstate

were infinite

and glimpsed in it

a life with you,

so hard and true

a premonition

that the only trace of wish in

it was that it linger long enough to carry

me at least as far as Gary.

—Julian Dibbell