Ballade of the Back Road

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My father’s in business, takes it a day at a time, just keeping ahead of the wolves, he says, and goes from Gothenburg, looking for a way to find a deal on irrigation pipes. He knows the man will give him credit, and he also knows the farmer he’ll deliver it to won’t think it too forward to ask for a check. “That’s how it goes,” my father says. “No problem. Everything touches everything if you take it by steps. If I get to the bank on time,” he says, “I’ll be able to cover the checks I wrote to sell this pipe, buy lunch, drive back, not counting the dime I’ll use to call this man who maybe owes me some. Tomorrow I’ll pay off what I owe this other guy, but maybe I’ll sell something before then, or maybe I’ll take out another note,” he says. “No problem. Everything touches everything.

Now if you’ll just help me load this load there’s time for maybe another delivery for the cash flow to start tomorrow with.” He drives me out to find this farmer’s farm, and soon we’re lost, driving along rows and rows of corn, and my father says, “I suppose it wouldn’t hurt to get to this first thing in the morning. Let’s start driving back before the gas stations close.” He says, “No problem. Everything touches everything.

If you leave out the middle you’ll never come close to what you’re trying to get at, which in this case is gasoline. Seems I can’t remember where this road goes,” he says. “No problem. Everything touches everything.”