Photographs from Rt. 80

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1. Here, the fields in rough January light, a barn, a line of trees. Distance, a blue horizon, the absence of particulars. In the abandoned barn the old boards alternate with nothing, with ether: wood, light, wood, the whole thing glowing in the iridescent field, this constant movement and our silence, having been close to the unspeakable: illness, family, the suffocating sadness of your hometown at night. The sun moves against the edges of the world, what we know, what we do not know. I am thinking about what God wants, about the idea of God wanting. The trees, chosen to grow here, in this line, are intricate, and full of intent.

2. In the wide frame of our windshield at least three kinds of weather: to our right chiaroscuro, the dark clouds light-tinged. On the left a flat plane of pale blue. Miles ahead of us, east, a column of rain gray and singular, beneath the cover of cumulous.

The aperture dilates its fraction of time, consumes its given quantity of light, and days later from this cardboard box, this human machine: weather and world, even the feeling of driving all afternoon through miles of winter-laden fields, your landscape, your wordless ground, iowa.