Driving Home, Just North of Chetek
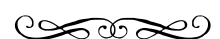
It didn't feel very dangerous at the time,
and driving back drunk from Rice Lake
to Chetek late at night after drinking
at the Wooden Nickel would've been bad
enough, but the idea came to me to turn
off my headlights, and I found myself
doing 75 MPH on County Highway SS
with the unused Chicago & North Western
tracks off to my right and the unplowed
fields of Barron County off to my left,
two thin lanes squeezing blurry into one,
my black '65 Impala Super Sport straddling
the double yellow line and hoping
the ditches on either side of me
would stay on either side of me,
and I was looking up from my open window
into the clear spring Wisconsin sky
and didn't see the group of whitetail deer
standing in the roadway ahead of me
but they must not have seen me either
so I split the thin difference between
a large doe on my left and her fawn
on my right, and if I had reached out
I might have touched her smooth back
and felt her muscles tense and twitch just
before the instant she made for the ditch
and my hands began shaking and my breath
sucked itself deep into my chest while
the stars blazed themselves into my eyes
and the road burrowed straight and deep
and black into the endless April night.

About Paul Scot August

Paul Scot August lives near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and works as a quality assurance software developer. He received an MA in creative writing from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and his poems have appeared in *Stoneboat*, *The Lindenwood Review*, *The Louisville Review*, *South Dakota Review*, and *Naugatuck River Review*. He is the co-curator of The Middle Coast Poets Reading Series.