

# GOING SOUTH

Keith S. Wilson

The road yawns before us,  
its Kentucky lilt crinkling  
like a brown paper bag at daybreak,  
trees stiff and sore from laying so long and  
a cranky coldness in the air.

When the water runs at noon,  
the road drags its feet steady  
as a Dixie marching song  
past the skin of the confederacy,  
which politely waves good morning  
from a pole thin as a silver switch.

The road nods back,  
less groggy with the warmth  
as it stretches, relies less  
on the hot and sweaty quilt  
pushed back across the land  
and more on the proud Appalachian  
platoon marching distantly across the horizon,  
peaks white with age, hands dry as coal  
and so deliberate.

The road whispers something then,  
and the grass' cheeks,  
bourbon brown this morning,  
blush now green  
and the Tennessee trees embarrassingly  
blossom in the heat of the moment.

The road smiles across the hills,  
smooth like a dark stream,  
it pours its evening waters out to sea  
leaving us exhausted and reaching for  
the land, which is still familiar  
even with so much more color  
than Northern Kentucky.

There are reflections about,  
familiar silhouettes  
which nod but don't speak.  
It is so quiet and calm  
that our breaths run together  
into the evening,  
become a new kind of silence,  
which the road understands  
better than anyone.