

# Transit

## Maspyke

The merge from the turnpike was murder, but its never a cinch  
It was Friday at five, and no one was giving an inch  
They squeezed and the edged and they glared  
Half them clearly impaired by rage or exhaustion  
The rest were just touchy as hellSomewhere near Paterson everything slowed to a crawl  
The all-news station was thanking someone for the call  
Its a van from St. Agness choir  
Theres a nun out there changing a tire  
By the time they got by her, tempers were out of controlSo they all hit the gas in a dash for position  
Bobing and weaving and flashing their highbeams  
Fliping the bird and screaming obscenities  
A well-insured hoard hell-bent on SaturdayAnd so they continued west-bound and into the sun  
Law and decorum constraining nary a one  
By then it was devil-may-care  
Not one even vaguely aware  
That they had come all the way to the Delaware Water GapBut how had it happened? They had all missed their  
exits  
How had it happened? Was it some kind of vortex?  
And in they all went, bumper to bumper  
Faster and faster, no sign of a trooper  
In they all went, like sheep to the slaughter  
Bankers and carpenters, doctors and lawyers  
And in they all went, families in minivans  
Ashcroft republicans, weekend militiamen  
They followed the river, and rounded the bend  
Between minsi and tammany and into their destiny  
Lying in ambush right their before them  
The angry old sun right on the horizonSister Maria tightened the bolts of the spare  
She said a quick prayer and put the old van into gear  
Thank God that the traffic was light  
If she hurried she might not be late  
For that evenings performance at the state penitentiaryShe entered the common room and their was her choir  
Altos and baritones, basses and tenors  
Car thieves and crack dealers, mobsters and murderers  
Husbands and sons, fathers and brothers  
And so it began in glorious harmony  
Softly and Tenderly calling for you and me  
With the interstate whining way off in the distance  
And the sun going down through the bars of the prison

They poured out their souls, they poured out their memories  
They poured out their hopes for what's left of eternity  
To sister Maria her soul like a prism  
For the light of forgiveness on all of their faces

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