

Cant on the Moving Road

**For living words belong to those who make, / And die when distant
hands their shape would take.**

When roads grow strange, a camp makes speech its road
A chalk-marked tank keeps every traveler's name
Stock frames let local monikas explode
And mouths make comrades present in the same

Yet songs elude the net that seeks to bind
For scraps and variants shift from tongue to tongue
Preserve the roughness, lest the gloss leave mind
Let use, not rule, decide what words are sung

Make work and waiting legible in slang
Let humor turn the hard day's lack to light
Let each apprentice hear how voices sang
And let old terms depart when life takes flight

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And die when distant hands their shape would take.