

# places you'll sleep your first week in california

Taylor Gates

*"And the sky, it stretches deep/Will we rest our heads to slumber/Neath the vines/Of California wine/Neath the sun/Of California One?"*

The Decemberists

"California One/Youth and Beauty Brigade"

*Castaways and Cutouts*

05/2002

Hush Records

**i.** a popped air mattress  
whose open mouth hisses  
no matter how much duct tape  
you band-aid onto green rubber.  
put your ear to your pillow  
and it's a conch shell.

dream of stirring  
pacific tides  
into a can of la croix.

**ii.** a brown mat  
like the one your father bought  
at a garage sale to pad  
your sister's somersaults.  
wake up with aching hips  
and sore shoulders.

dream of floating  
down rodeo drive  
on a hollywood star.

**iii.** your friend's pull-out couch  
wearing wine-stained jeans,  
a borrowed OSU sweatshirt,  
last night's makeup.  
no sheets on this bed,  
but no cockroaches under.

dream of filling  
a salt-shaker with sand,  
sprinkling it on avocado toast.

**iv.** the back of an uber  
at one in the morning.  
count streetlights,  
not sheep.  
let a korean pop lullaby  
lull you to sleep.

dream of tattooing  
a map of the 405  
onto your veins.