

The Heart of the Blue Whale

Nica Bengzon

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My sister dreams of seeing a blue whale in the wild one day. She says she loves them for how big they are, blood vessels like tunnels hearts heavy as cars. She's driving right now as she tells me to imagine the crawl through the arteries to reach this heart. Imagine listening to the whale's bloodstream and hearing the roll of the ocean, one journey within and one without. Imagine all the singing they must do on the sea's roads, a tune for every current reverberating up from depths so crushing only machines can follow. I plug the aux cord in and say I hear the whales anytime we sing together in her car at dusk, leaving the university behind us for home. When I play "Love on the Weekend" on Fridays, because sometimes that's enough to feel you've made it somewhere. When John says I'll be the DJ, she'll be the driver, like he can see me and this tiny person and the fearless way she brings her seat right up to the wheel. He strums. I say there's no ocean in this song, and we live now in the smack middle of a dehydrated city, but maybe these drives we take are the same—some kind of migratory pattern, one way of knowing the world that happens in the blood. Who can say, really how anything knows where to go? All we know is when we're on the highway we hear the tide that will take us where we belong, and what carries us is no less than a heart made of steel and gasoline and the thrum of a stranger's guitar and her little voice, and mine.



John Mayer

"Love on the Weekend"

The Search for Everything

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