

Road Trip  
*Big Stone Gap*  
*For Alexandra*  
(Original Version)

I

A summer traveler in rural mountains,  
you navigate a winding path,  
your favorite verdant trees  
beckoning you toward elusive sunshine,  
cocooning you in natural love,  
inspiring artistic energy—  
photographs through windshield glass,  
meandering words honed as poetic lines.

II

I ride along in video, imagining the warmth  
of sunshine as treetop leaves retract,  
allowing a beam to reach your path.  
I read provocative verse, conjure neon brushstrokes  
capturing your spirit in black light galleries,  
wishing my arms could reach around you,  
that protection was still possible if not for  
crumbled safety glass on a rainy Halloween afternoon.

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## Road Trips

### *For Alexandra*

(Re (En) Visioned)

#### I. In Big Stone Gap, VA

A summer traveler, our daughter navigates a verdant path in southern Appalachia,  
driving toward an elusive destination, a new client's residence on Little Stone Mountain.

Timber trunks and branches reach to connect, forming a natural tunnel,  
a lush canopy cocooning her for us, an embrace warmed by a tapestry of dappled sunlight.

Inspired by artistic energy, she stops to capture moments on camera, images  
blurred by glare on windshield glass, captioned by meandering words we read as poetic lines.

#### II. After Paducah, KY

We travel along by video, witnessing sunlight's ray envelop you as canopy leaves  
retract, admiring your spirit of adventure, your fascination with freedom on rustic roads.

We follow your photographic journey from Virginia to Kentucky—springboards  
for provocative verse and fluorescent brushstrokes destined for black-light galleries, unrealized.

We imagine sunlight replacing rain, stoplights cleared of unruly branches, our arms reaching  
around you, protection still possible—if not for crumbled windshield glass on a stormy  
afternoon.

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Bio: Retired from a forty-year career teaching English and Creative Writing for Prince William County schools, Cathy Hailey teaches as an adjunct in Johns Hopkins University's online MA in Teaching Writing program. She is a poet who coordinates Poetry in the Schools for the Poetry Society of Virginia and organizes In the Company of Laureates, a biennial reading of poets laureate held in Prince William County. She enjoys collaborating with visual artists and musicians. Her writing has been published in *Poetry Virginia* and *The Journal of the Virginia Writing Project* and in small anthologies associated with special projects—usually ekphrastic collections. Poems are forthcoming in *Written in Arlington, the anthology of Arlington poetry* and the *Prince William County Poetry Review*.