

Southern California Wants To Be Western New York

Dar Williams

There's a part of the country could drop off tomorrow in an earthquake,
Yeah, it's out there on the cutting edge, the people move, the sidewalks shake.
And there's another part of the country with a land that gently creaks and thuds,
Where the heavy snows make faucets leak in bathrooms with free-standing tubs.
They're in houses that are haunted, the with kids who lie awake and think about
All the generations past who used to use that dripping sink.

And sometimes one place wants to slip into the other just to see
What it's like to trade its demons for the restless ghost of Mr s. Ogilvey,
She used to pick the mint from her front yard to dress the Sunday pork,
Sometimes southern California wants to be western New York.

It wants to have a family business in sheet metal or power tools,
It wants to have a diner where the coffee tastes like diesel fuel,
And it wants to find the glory of a town they say has hit the kids,
And it wants to have a snow day that will turn its parents into kids,
And it's embarrassed, but it's lusting after a SUNY student with mousy brown hair who is
Taking out the compost, making coffee in long underwear.

And southern California says to save a place, I'll meet you there,
And it tried to pack up its Miata, all it could fit was a prayer,
Sometimes the stakes are bogus, sometimes the fast lane hits a fork,
Sometimes southern California wants to be western New York.

Tempe, Arizona thinks the Everglades are greener and wetter,
And Washington, D.C. thinks that Atlanta integrated better,
But I think that southern California has more pain that we can say,
'Cause it wants to travel back in time, but it just can't leave L.A.

But now I hear they've got a theme park planned, designed to ma

ke you gasp and say,
Oh, I bet that crumbling mill town was a booming mill town in its day,
And the old investors scoff at this, but the young ones hope they'll take a chance,
And they promise it will make more dough than Mickey Mouse in northern France,
And the planners planned an opening day, a town historian will host,
And the waitresses look like waitresses who want to leave for the west coast.

And they'll have pattering on rainy weekends, autumn days that make you feel sad,
They'll have hundred year old plumbing and the family you never had,
And a Hudson River clean-up concert and a bundle-bearing stork,
And I hear they've got a menu planned, it's très western New York.