

No More Buffalo

James McMurtry

I guess we knew the cards were stacked
started out the best of friends
and we beat that highway 'till it quit beating back
it didn't mean much in the end some you win, some you lose
some you throw away
we headed South across those Colorado plains
just as empty as the day we looked around at all we saw
remembered all we'd hoped to see
looking out through the bugs on the windshield
somebody said to me

no more buffalo
blue skies or open road
no more rodeo
no more noise
take this Cadillac
park it out in back
mama's calling
put away the toys

don't chase that carrot
'till it makes you sick
what do you think you're gonna prove
just let it dangle
'till it falls off that stick
that's when you make your move

don't go chasing after shooting stars
trying to make yourself a name
you could joust at the windmills
with that old Fender guitar
you'd probably do about the same

I never thought they'd ever doubt my words
I guess they were just too tired to care
I'd point to the horizon
to the dust of the herds
still hovering in the air
somebody said it aint any such
man you wish so hard you're scaring me
and those are combines kicking up that dust
but I guess you can see what you want to see
you can keep on chasing what used to be there
top that rise and face the pain

but man they were here
they were here I swear
not just these bleaching bones
stretching across the plain