

TWO SIGNS

Matthew Miller

1: Hamm's

I am not at one with the machine. I am not separate from it. I suspect I'm a decoration. My world stretches between cylinders. It creeps across the light. I stare at this match's tired little flame. My cigarette never gets lit. The campfire burns on & on. All is picturesque. The waterfall unspools. The clouds glide on their tracks. The man beside me keeps gazing at the lake. He is a tireless fisherman. We've never said a word to each other. Never slept in the tent. I think neither one of us pitched it. Sometimes they call me "beautiful." They have never touched me. I watch them as I go around. They lift their glasses up & down. They breathe smoke in & out. I'd like to light this cigarette. I'd like to go with those people when they leave.

2: Miller

What they don't know is that I can think & hear & see, just like all of them. I've learned the names for things like "beer," "cloud," & "mountain." Those white dots in the sky are "snow." Letters screaming in boxes equal "Ad-ver-tise-ments." I memorize the sounds, and they course through me. There are names for each face and my name is "Miller," or maybe "Sign." I love how outside they touch & withdraw. I wish I could too. My life is to roll around before the Great Light and be pretty. And I am. I love the light that is always behind me. It shines through me & my world into their world, for a while. Then, darkness. But they have lights too, only not so great as mine. I have the Great Light & words in the sky. I have sounds, stories & moving colors. And I have a purpose in this world, which is to go around & around.