

Graduation Day

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Unlike the state roads and mile-square fields,
the horizon in Chancellor, South Dakota is not a straight line.
It shifts in the yellow wind from the ethanol plant
and bends at the edge of the soybean field
where coyotes yelp at dusk.
In winter, the horizon is low as the blowing snow
pushing cars into ditches, taking our breath away.
When the weaning calves cry out in May,
the horizon lowers still, until it is the window frame
and wood slat walls closing in. Some of us won't ever leave.
But today the old blue Ford, spray-painted and ribbon-decked,
races down the middle of Route 44 with Meghan at the wheel,
gunning the engine, flying into the open sky.

Discussion questions for the poem *Graduation Day*:

1. How does this poem relate to Erikson's concept of identity versus role diffusion for Meghan?
 2. What choices does Meghan have to make in the immediate future about her life?
 3. What do you think that Meghan is thinking about as she flies down Route 44?
 4. How do you think Meghan will remember this day as she remembers this time in her life?
 5. Do you think that she will consider this day a turning point in her life? Explain.
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