Nebraska
Matt Mason

1
Springsteen calls the album “Nebraska”
even though it’s mostly Jersey.
Lot of nighttime, though,
lot of highway,
could
all look the same,
could
all sound alike,
driver’s side window down,
air dragging a sleeve up your shoulder
as your hand moves like a bird,
up and down
over the long, yellow line.

2
I would’ve tried out
for a bit part in Alexander Payne’s movie
but couldn’t get off work
and drive to Norfolk;
they’d sent some pages
with lines for a cousin
I thought I could play,
but, when you see the finished cut,
it’s obvious
I’d have stuck out like a tourist
in the movie
named after my home.

3
Mine’s not acoustic guitar black and white.
Mine has ukulele and tuba.
Mine pops in emerald, vermilion and blue,
Stratocaster, surf guitar, Casio keyboard,
violet, turquoise, silver and rust.

You get me, right?

I could make lists till the cow metaphors come home.
Yes, it’d swing around to harmonica, grey,
a cheap piece of strung timber, too,
eventually;
but it’s all here in symphonies,
in spectrums,
in choruses,
in color.

4
There’s a story:
the reporter, Ninette, gets a call in the newsroom,
tired at first, but the questions are good
so she spends time remembering,
finding what details from an old murder
she still has filed in her fingers.

After a bit, she puts the phone down, click,
stands up and asks these folks
writing Husker football and bridge closings,
This gentleman I was just speaking to, has anyone ever heard of
Bruce Springsteen?

Turns out
they have.

5
So listen.
So look out.
I enter this
as evidence:
no matter what
those other guys said,
it all
went down
like this.