

eric sommer

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bull frogs

jackhammer resonated
thru my travel lodge room
eating up the concrete
making way for new stairs
and improvement
the feed and grain in the corner
off the alley
across from the wildflower cafe
seems busy, bustling and sales hectic
on this soft, july morning

the family dollar is
getting a makeover
and it's a family affair
kids swinging hammers and
arms flailing in the air
a turbo charged economy
and when I get my oil changed
customer service with a huge white-teeth chomper smile
and a cool pawn shop reverie
and the corner across from the bank
is bright and clean
as the high intensity lights
of the northern minnesota july sun
slowly grill the concrete

a crisp light that gets
brighter as you look at it's
reflection on the white washed clapboard
of rosies cafe
and the streets are wide and
expansive in the noon sun
and no thoughtless curbs coral the
front lawns and restrict a blade from
its wandering essence

and the houses on main street
bold, beautiful and so expertly set

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back in the sculptured wood
the back streets anchored
by corners that support turrets
wide wrap-around porch life
thick lawns and a stand alone
garage with a few
canoes in the yard and
a set of antlers by the side door
or in the grass

a few blocks, a right and a left and across a little
bridge is a bend in a small river where
late in the afternoon, as the shadows
advance on the impossibly green
reeds, leaves, swamp grass and high grass
bushes that skirt the unbelievably
quite, idyllic scene
that would make a post card blush

and there the bing-bong, bing-bong of the
king bull frogs picks up, oblivious to
any intruder
and back and forth
across this small river that could
almost be crossed in a single jump

it's a lob-service-set of the late afernoon
bull frog crowd
lively, full throated chorus after full throated chorus

now each bing-bong getting so deep and resonant
with the high end trailing up into the clouds of
a sky so blue and endless
and falling back to resonate on
the mirrored surface of the water

it's a kettle drum bull frog corps
daily ritual
sounding like a much too loose kettle drum head
from a discarded high school band room
kettle set that rolled away from the ocre peeling paint
of the band room

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for the summer afternoon

too impossibly deep to accompany
any known musical arrangement but
so perfectly attuned to the bull frog
symphony on the curve in this little river

so far from anywhere and
so, so far from anywhere

it's a glimpse behind the curtain
on a small, nondescript little river bank

so far from anywhere and
so, so far from anywhere

a staged performance
a command performance
by the bull frogs of hinkley, minnesota