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## Queers on the Oregon Trail

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# QUEERS ON THE OREGON TRAIL

to Oregon I'm relentless:  
on holidays I pull at your  
shawl and beg you to play

settler as the men down-  
stairs pray for our souls  
long before we understand  
what it means to be *queers*.

even the room is magic:  
austere, New England white,  
snow-lined sill mapping

the cylinder glass window  
that moans with the sneezing  
attic door we pretend is  
haunted by the first pioneers.

even the quiet

before the old, angry Compaq  
drops us on the high plains,  
where we'll purchase two

oxen to drive West toward  
the Columbia: pray we  
live long enough to see  
the other side.

MATT VEKAKIS