

BENJAMIN LANDRY

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*Oregon Trail*

I loved most coming to the river,  
not having yet decided to ford  
or wait it out, waters rising,  
Uncle snakebit and rations running low.

I was a slow god, making a slow decision,  
while the world went on mowing  
and the soaps proffered miracle  
after cheap miracle in the afternoon.

In short, we were between accidents,  
surgeries and recovery time.  
Still, the system needed to know,  
Would I please insert the next 5¼ inch floppy disc?

That's when I noticed the oxen for the first time,  
their pixilated ribs and lolling tongues,  
the animal look in their eyes:  
anxious, patient and ready to die.