

City of Refuge: John Fahey

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“interpretation in the fields of reptiles and mud”

Black days, black nights; you think you might be safe.
A note picked too hard: were you ever safe?
‘Black on everything,’ you wrote, tuning a secret life.

Pollen, and promise, floating on the April air.
Late shift at the station, gas fumes in the air.
Night cops getting gas, no one robs you there.

Batteries for their flashlights, pure honey for your tea.
Honey from an empty hive, a hand-drill for making tea.
The bible-man sells bibles, you can have the blues for free.

What’s the riddle, where’s the road, what’s burning far away?
The hero’s a pimp, a robber, a killer; you smell burning far away.
You’ll never guess what’s burning, go ahead and play.

Desolate troubled outlaw migrant pagan skeptic panic.
Pan plays in the field, the field’s on fire with panic.
Fingers find the strings like a cat on a catwalk.

City of refuge, there’s nowhere you call home.
City of refusals, with nothing to atone.
You know everything you knew, you own what you disown.