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Things To Do In Weatherford, Oklahoma

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Things To Do In Weatherford, Oklahoma

Dean Rader, English, College of Arts and Sciences, University of San Francisco

rejoice you don't live
in Clinton eat
fried onion burgers at the grill drive by
one of seven Baptist churches pray
at the Catholic one
scare your cousin
at Little Ruffie's grave drive
your grandfather's Lincoln onto the runway
at the airport
swear to remember every star
be grateful you don't live
in Hydro
break into the junkyard spray
your friends with
the fire extinguisher you stole
from the junior high gymnasium steal
a fire extinguisher from the junior
high gymnasium
watch your mother dance to Stevie Wonder
practice your curveball
ride your bike to Dead Woman's
Crossing wait for the tornado siren to end
remember arrival is not the opposite
of departure
loiter in front of the girl's dormitory
at the university pretending
you belong
drive your grandfather's golf cart with him in it sneak
vodka into the Putt-Putt
take your grandmother to the library
get cheese
tater tots at Sonic maybe a cherry limeade
but not at Braum's know every
street
consider the dead beneath Ghost Mound
drag main even with

your sister
 & her friends
belong
 at the Rodeo ground & the Ag barn
go on harvest
 give thanks you don't live
 in Burns Flat climb onto the roof
of the high school watch the college
 girls emerge from the cowboy bar
 mow your grandparents' yard
 use the bag
imagine the day you no longer mow
drive and drive and drive and drive and
listen to the Gap Band
 listen to Led Zeppelin
 listen to the night song of crickets and bullfrogs
listen to your father snore
 in one of the churches
believe in the holiness of the tractor and combine
kneel before the gold altar of wheat light
 ask the lord for forgiveness when you don't
and when you don't
 know why

Dean Rader has written, edited, or co-edited 11 books. His most recent include Bullets into Bells: Poets and Citizens Respond to Gun Violence, edited with Brian Clements & Alexandra Teague (Beacon), and Self-Portrait as Wikipedia Entry (Copper Canyon), a finalist for the Oklahoma Book Award and the Northern California Book Award. At present, he is collaborating with the calligrapher Thomas Ingmire on a series visual/textual projects. He is also a 2019 Guggenheim Fellow in Poetry.