

Haze

by Jarrid Deaton

It was a four-wheeler that took out Hasil Adkins in Boone County, West Virginia. Of all the death-dealing things in the world, all of the alcohol poured down his throat, the depression, the raw meat for meals, it was a kid on a machine that brought an end to the Haze. Just like D-Ray White's tapping still bounces off the mountains if the right person is listening, Hasil's hoots and howls are trapped in record wax like a blood-drunk mosquito in amber. The boy who hit Hasil knows this. He knows that sound keeps Hasil around. Somewhere, somebody is spinning one of Hasil's records, and the manic singing drifts for miles on the West Virginia wind, insane phrases and energy breaking apart but maintaining the course straight for the boy's ears. Hasil's voice and the banging of his drum and guitar burrows deep, something more than music, and fills the boy's brain with dreams of living commodity meat stalking him through the woods, severed heads nailed to walls, hot dogs fired like missiles, and he can't run in the dream world of Hasil's music, he can't get away, because his feet get caught in the four-wheeler tracks he made, deep groves filled with blood and mud. Every night, he's trapped, and he knows that nothing ever really goes away in Boone County.

