

## **Afterlife**

In the distance, two minuscule lights  
appear in front of me. Snow has been falling all evening.

The roads are slick as liars' tongues. My hands  
grip the wheel as if I am strangling  
a confession out of it, as though if I hold on tight enough

I'll maintain control. The yellow line turns  
from a dashed doorway into a solid warning.

As I drive this two-lane highway  
with a car coming from the opposite direction

I think about the slightest adjustment  
that would gently slide my car to the other side  
of the imaginary wall that splits this road

in half and I would become one  
with whatever follows four headlights  
slamming into each other like two bulls

full of steam and hostility. My need  
to be shattered is not constant. Despair  
comes to me in mouthfuls that I refuse  
to swallow but the bitter taste coats my dry lips.

Dark roads present solutions as easy as letting  
go and allowing my car to drift  
into the path of oncoming traffic.

The lights are getting brighter like regret

gains weight as you lay in bed at night  
rehearsing your failures,  
each fractured scene shatters further  
with each attempt to glue it together.  
The splintering of memories is silent  
the way fingers letting go of a steering wheel  
don't make a sound. The darkest moment  
is the brightest moment when the lights  
blind you with their intensity.  
I open my eyes to find the road, regain  
my bearings. I stare into the darkness and wonder  
if the driver of the car that passed me  
too closely to that yellow line  
also decided not to swallow  
their spoonful of oblivion  
just then.

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