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## Cradle Drop

Moriah Ellenborg  
*Denison University*

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# Cradle Drop

By Moriah Ellenborgren

I wonder if you're listening  
As you close your eyes  
And you begin to sway  
Under the weight of your consciousness.  
Or perhaps you're dreaming of a long-forgotten childhood:  
Before checking accounts and mortgage payments,  
The college courses you never finished,  
And the diamond ring he gave you—  
The one which needs to be reset.

As I gradually push harder on the gas pedal  
And the car begins to gain speed,  
I wonder if I ever stood  
At the side of my crib  
And stretched my arms toward you  
As if to say, "I need you".  
And I wonder,  
With some hesitation,  
If I would stretch my arms towards you now,  
If I knew it would make you happy.

I slightly turn my head  
So that I can see your heavy lids  
And it reminds me of all those stories  
You used to tell  
About me crying  
    And crying  
        And crying.  
And you recalled with a smile  
How you would buckle me into my car seat  
And start the motor  
And by the third time around the block  
Cheeks would be clammy,    eyes dry.

I wonder if that's what we're doing now,  
Wonder if I should have buckled you in tight  
And maybe hummed some lullaby  
Under my breath.  
Because by the second mile your eyes have closed  
And your thoughts have ceased  
And your lips have relaxed.

I'm not sure when our roles switched.  
Maybe when you reached the far end of your middle years  
Or maybe when I began to plan for mine,  
But it's my keys now dangling from the ignition

And you are my passenger  
Fast asleep in your baby-blue sweater.

And as I turn the next corner, I say something  
About how I could hear you sobbing last night  
Alone in your room  
On your big-girl bed.  
And that I know this isn't what you wanted your life to be.  
And then I whisper softly that "I'm sorry"  
And I know then you haven't been listening  
Because you do not make a move.