2012

Cradle Drop

Moriah Ellenborgen
Denison University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol58/iss1/25

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.
Cradle Drop
By Moriah Ellenborgen

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.