

## **A few miles from the moon**

### **I**

I'd never seen such  
sunlight pour through  
these windows. The shut  
blinds bursting until  
I give them a turn  
and it floods onto the bed  
over the carpet, light  
touching my feet  
and my neck.  
Your parents sitting  
at a dinner table. Guacamole  
in a dark stone bowl  
and tortilla chips in a basket.  
I'm taking deep breaths  
in the car. You're holding  
my hand. Your red lips move  
in ways that make  
the heart in me twist  
and turn in my chest.  
You check the mirror  
and give yourself a touch  
of make up. I hold the wheel  
and turn and your lips  
are so red and my heart  
is twisting and turning.  
Your dad pours beer  
into a glass. He smiles.  
He says he can pour  
blindfolded. Your mom,  
she is beautiful. You have  
the same shine she has  
in her warm eyes. The  
car pulls up into the  
parking lot. When we  
open the doors, you say  
with some nervousness,  
"This is it."

### **II**

Rounding the curve  
of the road you pulled  
out your camera to

take in the natural  
sunlit blue of the ocean  
as it pulled over shore  
like a bedspread. Your  
black wide-brimmed  
hat on the dash, one  
hand of mine on the  
wheel, the other by  
your side. You stood  
before my full length  
mirror saying, "This  
is totally see-through,"  
but I couldn't hear  
a word you were saying  
over that gorgeous black  
bra holstering your  
chest as I tied my  
shoelaces. "I'm okay  
with it," I said.  
And all that Spanish  
architecture that spanned  
down State street  
seemed so beautiful,  
that gorgeous sun bleached  
rock, white as newborn  
beach sand and smooth  
as skipping stone. Holding  
hands down this quaint  
boulevard we stopped  
in front of an antique theater  
to take photos, to capture  
the shadows tucked beneath  
the curves and roundings  
of its perfectly molded  
exterior. You sang Just  
Like Heaven in the car  
like a junior high school  
girl holding a heart-shaped  
note to her chest. Goddamn,  
how I wanted to take  
my hands off the wheel,  
slide them up your  
jaw until my fingertips  
were beneath your earlobes  
and kiss you while the  
car slowly lifted

up like a mind  
caught in a day dream  
and drifted over  
PCH overlooking  
the coastal highway.

### III

I thought your dad would  
be holding a gun beneath  
the table. The second I turned  
to gaze at you, we'd all hear  
the shot fire and I'd be  
on my back holding  
up my knee to slow  
the bleeding, and you—  
you'd be yelling,  
Daddy! That's no  
way to behave!"  
When the ambulance  
arrived, your mom,  
holding my hand,  
would promise me he's  
not usually like this—it's  
just, well, Kim's his  
princess and—well,  
you know how men  
get. I'd nod,  
understandingly, and  
as the paramedics  
prepare to shut  
the two rear  
doors,  
you, holding my hand  
would've said,  
"It actually didn't  
go so bad. I expected  
much worse."  
The doors slam shut,  
and the ambulance whales  
into the night,  
its red cones of light  
flashing through the streets  
making people stop  
to wonder about  
the poor soul being

carried away.

#### IV

I could barely breathe  
after you said, “ ‘Hey’  
sounds like a word  
a lesbian  
would say.” We were  
on a slight detour  
headed for Santa Barbara,  
and I was being  
discreet about looking  
at your legs.  
So long and smooth  
and I wouldn’t call  
their complexion ‘milk’  
being that they’re more  
‘dulce de leche.’  
Lifting a roll of sushi  
with my chopsticks  
and dampening its rice  
in soy sauce you were  
so happy your parents  
had approved of me.  
I was happy all my teeth  
were still in my mouth  
and your dad hadn’t broken  
my legs. We were both  
just very very happy.  
But me just a little more  
because every time  
I’d look at you I couldn’t  
believe you were  
here, this  
incredibly beautiful woman—  
on a date with me.  
At night we sat at a  
park bench beneath  
the stars.  
The ocean was dark  
and we could hear  
the sound of it washing  
over shore. We took  
advantage of this

beautiful starlit  
scenery for two  
and kissed and kissed  
and lips to lips with hand  
to cheek until the orange  
glow of the moon was caught  
in the corner of your eye.

We didn't believe  
at first that this was the moon,  
but it crept up slowly  
and reflected in the water  
in a long narrow stretch  
of pale shimmer that almost  
appeared as though there  
was a road on the water  
that led all the way up  
through the night  
to it.

It made me wonder how many  
miles away we were from  
the moon. Then I decided  
it didn't matter. What  
mattered most  
was all the love  
we'd make  
on the way  
there.