

The Freeway

Lee Robison

is two currents of light on the hill.
One drains into the western sky,
the other, into the maw of rock behind me.
I am a dazzled part of light that opens
the road ahead of me, and sucks me after it.
Dimly-lit faces float past in the dusk,
pale petals swirled on a black water,
carried away into the dark and darkening.
If I wonder who they are, they are
gone before I care.

Then on the road
the sizzle of anemic candles
and the annoying pulse of something wrong—
traffic stopped, starting and stopped again.
I slow into the eddy of it, frown
from my daze, then am in the flow

past the focusing narrows where someone
waves a candle, bleeding wan
sparks into the gloom.
Beyond him, a van off the road and something—
someone's wash, perhaps—tossed
on the black road, gathers gray in my light.

But it's not wash. It shapes in my light
into pale clay, then a body unattended
on pavement. There is something here I should
stop for. But I cannot think why. I would
not know how.

A woman's face,
floating past my shell of light for an instant,
peers through glass, her lips moving swiftly,
her face turning, one hand rising to rest,
pale, against the glass, as she
is impelled past me into dark.

Behind me, anonymous light darkens the dusk,
and men check reasons for death.
Ahead anonymous lights
and the last color
of day.