6 a.m./I-10

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6 hours on the road with
6 more to go.
The drive
stretches forever
as if the road might crumble
into the sea,
the January salt-waves
lapping up the pavement
as it sinks into the sand.
The sun finally decides
to start its day,
at first,
only as a sliver
of electric blue between
navy clouds, a thin slice
of the sky revealed by
God
and a giant silver letter opener.

As our two best friends
snooze in the back seat,
she attempts to keep me awake
when our song plays.

*There now, steady love,*
*So few come and won't go.*
*Will you, won't you*
*be the one I'll always know?*
*When I'm losing my control,*
*the city spins around.*
You're the only one who knows.
You slow it down.

“Do you still think of me
when you hear this song?”
Stealing a sideways glance,
I say, “I always did.”

We both turn our heads
toward the road
as the sun breaks through
the bottom of the clouds.
The road descends, and at the end,
between the row of Southern pines
that line both sides of the interstate,
the sky glows
pale gold and coral,
pigments Raphael used
to paint his heavenly cherubs.
We stare at the morning,
admiring the beauty of the sunrise
(and Isaac’s song),
refusing to dare utter a syllable
until he’s finished his oath.

Oh, oh, be my baby.
I'll look after you.

I neglect the urge
to reach for her hand,
almost laughing,
remembering
the reason we broke
up in October.