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Holding On

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HOLDING ON

You dreamed of fish with white meat,
white teeth, all gnashing: shark, cod,
halibut, a sullen dogfish. Your skull
throbs from last night's booze. Flip
the switch and face a firing squad
of light.

Maybe tomorrow you'll sleep forever,
nestle down into yourself and look for
the thing you've lost. Under a mound
of warm quilt you're buried in dreams.

Rituals of morning, of rising, of bacon
grease snapping at your wrists, warmed-
up coffee black as sky. You wish
you were tougher, that your face
wouldn't feel walked on. Even the slender
lilac makes it through winter. Shiver
in morning air as you go out, with empty
hands, nothing more sure than a steering
wheel to hold onto.