

# Studio One

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## Driving Backwards

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## DRIVING BACKWARDS

Even when you're not ready, it just happens:  
it's dusk, and your car begins to roll slowly  
backwards. Your leg is numb and you can't quite  
reach for the brake and the landscape in front of you

pulls away, a little faster each second. You panic  
at first, try to move your tingling foot but  
the car doesn't stop, no matter how hard you press  
the brake. You look ahead and

see the past, the places where you just drove,  
sliding quickly beyond you: intersections you used  
to cross, favorite trees you once climbed, houses where you lived  
glide past you and into the flat line of the horizon where  
your windshield is

steadily staring. The car looks suddenly  
newer, the nick on the glass healing over,  
the split on the upholstery sealing itself,  
the chrome shift lever brightening

to a shine, and soon you're  
okay with this backing up:  
You feel the scars on your body  
smoothing over and

disappearing. The odometer, too,  
is reversing itself, each mile sliding up into  
the forehead of the dashboard. You glance  
in the rearview mirror, see

someone who looks like you,  
a teenager standing on the gravel roadside  
hitchhiking, his thumb lifted high as if he could poke a hole  
in the darkness. As you pass him, he looks up at you briefly,

nods in recognition. For an instant you wonder  
if this is what dying might be like: Passing your younger self

without touching. He shrinks smaller and smaller  
into the horizon, and just before he disappears he raises one arm  
and waves at you, the same way  
you're waving at him, if you're saying

hello, or goodbye, or both at the same time.

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