Autumn prayer

My skin feels like a leather hide stretched over the bumper of my car
Catching bugs in my hair and teeth,
Feeling the still air slam against me at 80 miles per hour;
In hindsight, this drive might just be a 30 minute crash.

My hips tremble, and twitch
I picture the round, boney joint rotating in its socket, its place in my pelvis
So softly and smoothly, like a baby’s
fresh, slimy bald head
cupped in a ravaged mother’s loving palm.

The shakes, the constant motion
Swings down my legs from joint to joint along
The tendons and ligaments between the gaps,
    between my bones
Like electricity on a telephone wire,
Like naked men and women on metal poles

So desperately I try to focus on the image of them because
I cannot stand to face the horror I’m watching:
black worms crawling in from every single one of
360 degrees—
the perimeter of my vision
Is shrinking as I accelerate.

So I shove my palms against the steering wheel, and
Point my toes against the gas pedal, and
— I’m a shivering ballerina going 90
on the i10 going south
Whose lips are tinted pretty, muddy red
with blood that also french tips their two front teeth,
Whose cheeks are rouged with tension,
And friction,
Whose face is a graveyard littered with scabs,
Who’s curtains are definitely closing
Who sees the closing but—
I know I am but—
please…

Acceptance
of the pulsating, black worms,
Their constriction around my light,
My life as I know it, my right to breath,
Fills the empty anthill in my chest
With heavy aluminum dread oh,
god…oh

God.
So I park.

And as I'm still, I realize
This white flag will fly whether the hand who waves it is warm or not.
Pooling tears blur the black worms,
As finally
with the muscles in my jaw—
I can watch them now in the rear view mirror,
Jutting out and hardened,
like metamorphic limestone in fast motion,
Fast as the motion of the trees…and the peach colored mountains…—
“Hello. I see you. I've seen you all this time.”

My shoulders and back relax through the spasms,
I tilt my head, reach forward
And whisper
“Hello.”
I smile
“It's not up to me anymore, is it?”
I shut my eyes,
They're still there.
“Hello”
with the saliva glands in the corners of my mouth
filling and gargling my greeting,

As bitter melt sweeps across the bottom of my tongue and disintegrates again,
I cup my hands around an orange bottle,

“god,
If there's one thing you ever do for me,
Let it be this.”