



*Driving under the Influence by Miles Hyman*

## Driving Under the Influence

By Braeden Goodson and Erica Lynn

*after U.A. Fanthorpe*

### I

Driving under the influence of her, always  
Having my pedals pressed by seafoam heels and  
My wheel dug into by white satin gloves. She  
Is sometimes sharp and sometimes glassed with  
Irises filmed occasionally. But look at me, always  
Pristine cherry red, the kind you want to eat or  
At least let your fingertips dance along the  
Musculature, and if my headlights were on you  
Could see how the night cowers beneath them.  
All this to say, I am a creature sloshed full with  
Power. Until she slides into my front seat, key  
Ready. Just like that I am hers? Immediately  
I am a servant to her whims, her whims are dark  
And dangerous when they serve the liquor (and  
Everything is always poured eventually). My paint is  
The only thing fully dried, dull and dead next to the  
Neon filled sign. If she goes in, tries to take my current  
Glory for a spin, she'll smash it on the side of the road.  
I want to arrive alive, I want to arrive whole.

### II

Some things are not really a decision, everything  
Beckons. The wallet empties and the car doors fly  
Open as I approach. Air crackles with potential  
Energy, I've turned it to kinetic before and before:  
Driving under the influence of alcohol, never  
Fully aware of my surroundings just tunnel vision.  
Never focused on what's around me. Behind the  
Wheel zoning in and out of reality not thinking  
Just doing, liquor trickling down, I feel myself letting  
Go. My body feeling warm and fuzzy my mind is calm  
But worried about something (but what?) Speeding  
Up to counter my slow heart, I realize I'm going way

Too fast. Vellum pulled over my eyes, it's way  
Too late, the headlights are looking right at me. I can  
Not respond. I am liquor's puppet. Even now, sober  
Back straight with a popped hip, I feel the strings pull  
Me toward the neon lights, force a new bottle to my lips.  
Am I what is inside of me? I am not in the driver's seat.  
I want to arrive alive, I want to arrive alive complete.

### III

Not everyone who walks out always manages  
To walk back in. I watch them come, I watch them  
Go with bottles glinting in my neon glow, bags  
Strung round their wrists (their fingers are too  
Concerned with their car keys). It is so American  
To curse what you promote. Get a ladder, climb  
Up onto this store ledge, string yourself up here  
With me, wrap yourself with lights to attract them,  
Moths to an intentionally lit flame. Let your product  
Flow down their throats. Now you know how it feels  
To forever take. Learn your regulars: see the woman  
With the little red hat, with her faraway misery? You'll  
Pray to see her back tomorrow, bags heavy, just for your  
Selfish assurance—it took me some time to absorb that  
I am not a murderer. Simply filled with depressants, I am  
America's carefully stoked bonfire, rickety saferails put  
Up; the prey still falls in. I have learned to yearn  
Only for the bolts to give, for my own extinguishment.  
I want her to arrive alive, while I smash on pavement.