

The Edge of Night

by Michael Downing

The night wrapped its arms around us as we drove west, taking the highway past Medford towards Philly. The kids were asleep in the backseat and we were both counting the mile markers, staring out the windows with quiet eyes. I listened to the drone of the Chevy's engine and tried to figure out if the rumbling I heard was thunder in the distance, or something else I'd have to deal with when we got home. Playing with the knob on the radio she found a song we both remembered on the classic rock station; the lyrics came back easily but I kept them to myself — content to listen to her mangle the words as she tried singing along in a soft, broken voice. I thought about how we had danced to the song one time, slowly and carefully across the kitchen floor after the kids had gone to bed, but that was before we started measuring the blood we'd drawn from each other and comparing the scars that had been created. Now all I could do was hold on to the memory of how much I had once loved her as the night fell apart around me.

