

# Tingles

by Mark Waldrop

Your steering wheel is hot.  
You don't feel it though, I mean,  
It tingles some but it doesn't have that crawling, stinging feeling  
Like the way you'd feel it if they hadn't called.  
Not the way other people in Arizona feel it.  
You don't feel you or her or anything in between.

Driving toward Good Sam Hospital over a dry scarred desert road  
There are other cars and you notice that they exist  
But to you they're not really there.  
Just like streetlights looming; they're not on.  
They don't see you — you don't see them.  
Everything is far away and dizzy, like waking up in a new place.  
Like you've been drinking again but, you haven't.

Drinking might help.  
It couldn't hurt, you think. It might hurt.

You decide to stop.  
Nobody's going anywhere right now.  
There's too much time in the world--

The checker looks at you with his eyebrows up.  
Your shirt and forehead are ironed wrong and wrinkled.

In the car you take a sip of brandy, just one and  
It tingles like the steering wheel sliding down  
It spreads quickly from there  
And you're back on the road.  
Nobody's watching.

