

in the road

by [Amrita Skye Blaine](#) (October 2023)



Freeway and Aqueduct, Richard Diebenkorn, 1957

in the road

Highway 5
south of Redding
a seagull full of life
wheeling in the sky
misjudges smashing

into a semi's side—
now a broken thing
feathers torn loose
life knocked away
it drops
to the pavement,
there, then gone
so swift a death

barreling along
I tremble,
steady the wheel
notice
my thickening throat
late spring
innocent bird
unwitting trucker
I pray the gull
leaves no starving chicks
and consider
the circle—

ten years ago
and I remember

a turning

I turn
toward gratitude
leave behind
those anxious
thoughts
that do not serve

instead, I cherish
the warming rays—

finch splashes, shaking
drops into sunlight
field cat watching

just this
songbird, light and cat
backdrop of jasmine
weet pea
their fragrance

drifting my way
then sun strokes me
I lift my face
and drink at its well
enlivened to meet the day

small joys

my heart is on the hunt
for little joys—
how the hummingbird
all decked out
in iridescent green
hovers and sips,
and the flower
opens its heart
to the bird—
sunlight glints
a ruby flash as he flits
to another bloom

lantana heavy
with blossom, spilling
vermilion, gold, magenta
onto our pathway

moments here and gone
unless I take a breath
release my agenda—
busy human noise—
and stop
allow this marvel entry

in between

all we have is the tender time in between—Father Gregg Boyle

time is elastic
or so it seems
drags when we're kids
rushes when we
least want it to

my dad's abrupt death
on a Delta flight
couldn't time stop
to dignify him?
a day passed
a week flashed by
then a month
his voice faded—
the harder I hung on,
the less
I could hear him

the span between
birth and death
a finger snap
honor the tender time
in between

turn toward

body parts ache
neck, head, back—
there is only dawn,
birdsong,
and the discomfort
of being alive
I turn toward it
past resistance
to welcome this,
this very morning,
to find
the secret's secret
living under, inside—
delight
in simply being
here

[Table of Contents](#)

Amrita Skye Blaine develops themes of aging, coming of age, disability, and spiritual awakening. She received an MFA in Creative Writing from Antioch University in 2003. She has published a memoir, a three-novel trilogy, and has been published in twelve anthologies including five poetry anthologies. Her poems have been accepted by *Heart Balm*, *Soul-Lit*, *Macqueen's Quinterly*, *Braided Way Magazine*, *The Merton Seasonal*, *The Penwood Review*, and *Delta Poetry Review*. Her first book of poetry has been accepted for publication by *Finishing Line Press*.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](https://twitter.com/NERIconoclast)