

FIRST CHRISTMAS GIFT

Driving a winding two-lane road at dawn
rain hitting our car like darts,
we feel threatened by the gray, fog-shrouded world
and coming family drama
on our first Christmas together
and first with the children.
Shoulders tight, clenched fists,
separate statues stressed by atmospheric pressure—
blood throbs through veins long played-out,
pulses in ears waiting for answers.

And then
 temperatures
 dropped
below freezing

and, in a flash, our day
spins us
into a secret world,
acres of trees—maple, sycamore, oak—
where every tiniest twig
glitters like crystal in candlelight.

We laugh
at this first gift, grace
on our first Christmas together—
dreams safe
in nature's wrapping,
tied by ribbons of peace
and new-love.

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