

The Hostess

All you've got is loose change,
but Debbie buys you a drink
or two, says you need the love.
Later, you stumble out, light
a cigarette in your car, watch
the stars for signs of life,

too drunk to remember your life.
In the morning, you'll change,
you swear. Your kid watches
too much TV and doesn't drink
enough water. This last light
bill was too high. You'd love

a rich husband. You'd love
to win the lottery, to win a life
of luxury, where, all night, the lights
can stay on. *Boo, this'll change,*
you tell your kid. You drink
after work. Nobody is watching

your kid, but he can watch
after himself, for one night. Love
pours out of you with each drink,
in the form of slushy tears. The live
band at the bar slows down, changes
their tune to something lighter.

It makes you sway under the light,
dim and blue. Your friends watch
and laugh. *Girl, never change,*
they say. You are so loved.
Later, you come back to life
in your car. You won't drink

again, you swear. You won't drink
liquor, at least. The sunlight
stabs you in the brain. Your life
happened so fast, you forgot to watch
it pass. Now, you live for the love

of that kid. He thinks you'll change.

He doesn't know how to be alive, yet. You grab a drink.
You had just enough change in your pocket. You light
a cigarette, watch the stars, trembling with love.