

My Mother's Arms

(Not *your* mother's or *a* mother's but *my* mother's)

Lori Jenkins

Mom.

Mom-mom,

Mom-mom, mom-mom.

Like when I couldn't eat red popsicles because my tonsils disappeared

And I couldn't stay awake long enough to eat a yellow one instead

But I was awake enough to see her face

The drugs.

Drug-drugs, drug-drugs.

Like when she went to jail for two weeks because she used to do drugs

The longest she went without seeing my face except the nine months I was in her belly

Now it's been three months;

Ninety-two days since I had seen her face

And I didn't even realize it until thirty minutes before she left again

I couldn't open my eyes or speak or feel anything but her arms,

Your arms, mommy, your arms.

Your heart, mommy, your heart.

Thump-thump,

Thump-thump, thump-thump.

Like the speed bumps I'm hitting too hard because I'm crying too much

I miss you so much and it's only been thirty minutes since you left

I can't open my eyes or speak or feel anything

But my heart

Beating

Mom-mom, mom-mom,

Mom-mom.

