LEAST TERNS

I am all eyes as I drive—
eyes in the rearview mirror, eyes looking
down through the windshield,
out the sideview mirror.
The ice encases me in the car
and makes the car rattle.
I have somewhere to go
and must be there at a certain time,
but this is not where I want to go.
I want to look toward the river
and see the way the light plays
on the water, but I have to keep
my eyes on the road,
and someone is right behind me.

I am having to see from
the corner of my eyes, not fully
anymore, and through tears.
And I am not hearing
the cars passing me,
accelerating, moving efficiently.

I barely heard the doctor
explaining how practical and essential
it would be for me to get a hysterectomy
if I have a third recurrence of abnormal cells.
It would be rolling the dice
if I didn’t have one.
It made sense to give up my uterus.

But driving the car along the river
it doesn’t matter how much sense it makes,
the trees clinging to the banks,
the least terns ahead of me
then flying over the river,
a whiteness against the black rocks.