

Xing

I don't know how I brought a child
into the world when I can't reconcile

if crashing a car and a friend's skull
is karmic debt created

or payment for a past immoral act.
I open doors and say thank you and do not try

to behave in a way I cannot afford.
There's no barometer, no way to know

if the pendulum is swinging
away or toward, how many pay-it-forwards it takes

before I break even at the gambling table.
I could blend in with the pure

if it weren't for the scars that don't fade
no matter how many turtles I save,

so am I all that surprised
when my little boy tells me

of his palpable fear
to cross the street.