

The Woman Who Cries Speaks

“Then she went to sleep and oh it was so hard
not to cry. So hard.”

—Gertrude Stein, *Ida*

But then it is hard to cry and sleep at the same time. So I cry a little first, then sleep. Cry sleep cry sleep. Sigh. Sighs get in the way. Yes they do and are not pleasing. Just that lull makes me wipe away a tear. When I dab my eyes I wet the little letter B embroidered on my handkerchief and have to get another out of the drawer. Oh. It is so sad. The candle by the bed makes me cry. You see, it is always burning and not burning. What could be sadder? If I then lie down and cry, as I turn over the sheet gets wet and there is the dampness I feel on my shoulder and the crying begins anew. I have tried hard very hard not to cry in the morning but the sun shines through the window and you know how that is. I do not cry over rain. Anybody can. Sometimes I go downstairs and slice up a pear. It is the tear-drop shape I feel a special kinship to. Its sweetness tells me I should be resting now. I cry and keep on crying. For a long time I cried over the whistling teakettle. It was very pleasant. The dog barks the stairs creak the stove hisses I cry. If I cry too much the tears in my nose taste like a tin cup. No one comes to see me and I cry though I do not like visitors. Why is that do I suppose, then I cry some more. Milk spilled on the linoleum is nothing to cry over. Of course not. It is not interesting. Crying is so interesting I thought I would go to Boston. I rode the swan boats. The swan boat man does not like pedaling and steering all day around the pond, I said to myself. That made me cry. Then the little boy leaning over the side with his lollipop tumbled into the pond. His white dog went in too and floated away. Tears flowed. I cried so hard the tears thudded on my chest nearly tipping the boat. We did not go much of anywhere but around, tossing peanuts to the ducks. It was so pleasant I almost forgot to cry. Oh yes.