

and that's the circle I must take
in my crushable Toyota
if I wish to stay on the Black Horse Pike,

and I do.

THE WOMAN ON EDGEHILL ROAD

Ah, thinks the man, that woman walking
Edgehill Road, weeping,
has a story to tell, what luck to find
a woman like this.

All day he's wanted to tell *his* story,
but he knows the woman
has the weight of tears on her side, the primacy
of outward grief;

there'd be long listening before it would be
his sweet time.
He's in his slow car, slow because he wants
it slow—

last night's shouting and slammed door
putting him on cruise,
The woman is gesturing now, speaking out loud.
Once, no doubt,

the person she so hates was a god.
It's not funny,
but isn't it always funny, thinks the man,
to someone?

He would like to pull up close. "This is
the sadness car,"
he might say, "and this the weeping seat
and this the seat

where you keep things inside.” And they
would take turns
all the way into the next state
where suddenly

they wouldn’t need each other, so bored
would they be with sadness
and themselves. But the man is burdened
by the history of men,

by every man who’s yelled or whispered
from a car
on a road like this. He doesn’t want
to scare her

and, besides, he lacks charm when he’s sad.
When he’s sad
everything sounds wrong. He accelerates
into silence,

and will never tell his story as he might have,
though why should anyone care?
Already it’s lost as he turns into Weaver Lane
toward home,

has becomes a little more orderly, understood.
And the woman, too,
he’s thinking that years from now
her ugly trembling lip

will be steady, she’ll remember this afternoon
in the past tense,
all her pauses, everything she omits,
will be correct.