

## Upon Reading a Poem Entitled “Upon Seeing a Former Lover Pull Up Next to Me at the Intersection of Metaphysics Lane and Memorial Drive”

If I say this really happened once the audience swells with sardonic  
laughter, and I drive  
home feeling like John Dunce, Corn-Pone Boy. Or else it's greeted with  
the thick, sweet  
silence that invariably awaits the utterances of the Truly Lovelorn and  
Hopelessly Put-Upon.  
If I say it again I get a free commemorative plaque and lifetime  
permanent guest pass  
to the Country-Western Drive-Thru Dairy Queen 24-Hour Memorial  
Lovers-in-Hell  
Hall of Fame and Farmer Museum. Or I get to go to the Pyramus and  
Thisbe Hole-in-the-Wall  
Gang Members Pavilion, or the Dante and Beatrice Hell-in-a-Handbasket  
Water Arcade,  
where kids toss quarters idly into the Big Rock Candy Mountain  
Fountain of Tears. Or I get  
to hang out at the Butterfly McQueen I Don't Know Nothin' Gone  
With the Wind Tunnel  
to buy commemorative Paolo and Francesca bottles of Fresca, because  
they're so parched  
and all, their necks and backs so painfully arched, like former Olympians,  
like lovers blown apart, then brought back alongside each other,  
closer than Hell, but never quite touching,  
as if someone could derive pleasure from that, like parallel parking  
spaces in hell,

or a drive-in movie in separate cars, the stars out and all, when you're  
thinking  
with the total assurance and logical precision of a drunken sailor upon a  
runaway horse  
that you could find a way to hold the sweet moon in your arms, when  
everyone else knows clear as a Memphis belle that you've got no  
pull at all, that you have the chance of a fish-fried Fourth of July  
snowball in hell, and just when you figure that out for sure, she  
pulls away  
at the lights, the *Just Married* sign duct-taped on the back, your heart tied  
to the bumper, bouncing down Memorial Drive like a runaway  
trailer made of sneakers and old tin cans.