

Crossing the Humber

i.m. Philip Larkin

In the car again, I'm alone.
It's January, and the water beneath
Is a choppy, murky brown.
In the mist, it seems only a ploughed field,
Arched back of clay, tractored
Into deep waves.

The bridge shows its silver,
A dance of mad steel showing off.
It seems to know I depend on it,
Solitary in my workmobile, radio chuntering,
The word that saves.

Not like the trip between
The spare end of Lincolnshire
And the dour sulk of Hull bank
In the *Lincoln Castle*, whose wooden
Comforts offered light ale or coffee,
Springy sandwiches and morning wit.
Cosy. You had to talk or think
In the *Castle's* little frame.

Our human journeys remember you
And all our fears were like
those brassy pre-noon reflections
on the waters between ends and beginnings.