

## Profile of an SUV

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Senior Poetry

If it were a person: a butler, a shocking  
white cloth over one arm, starched

collars bright in the late afternoon sun. Or, if a dog:  
a poodle mix, just shampooed. Who knows what mix, I don't

know a dog breed any more than a vehicle model. The poodle  
is parked parallel to the curb, *sit, stay, stay*. Every muscle

tense for the next command, *stay, sit*. The  
road is grey, the trees are working-class green, the parking

lines are chipped and white, but the poodle is  
the whitest thing on the street. No, whitest is

the butler's immaculate windshield condescension.  
The butler sees the ugly people passing on the sidewalk—

such a wrinkled coat, such cheap shoes, no, not on  
his tires, not on his seats, not in his tinted windows.

Still, the poodle strains, tilts almost imperceptibly toward  
all the walking people, *see me, pet me, love me, release*

*me from this parking spot, let me find my master. Stay,*  
*sit, good SUV.* The other cars plod past in the

slow traffic, tired, old, workhorses. The other cars are dark,  
monotonous and sleepy. The SUV is toned and well-shaped,

the right kind of boxy with a curved back end, gleaming  
runners over the hood, a rear-view mirror alert and white,

sniffing the sea air, trying—*stay, stay, stay*—not to dash after the sound  
of the seagulls. All the while the butler, with his haughty cloth

so neatly folded, such a neatly folded cloth, such a perfect  
white cloth, sniffs at the shadow cast by his own prosperous hood,

waits outside of anything as human as patience or impatience,

for the return of his gentleman. A little woman just behind,

holding a camera in one hand, stands to read the placard  
about moneyed old sea captains and hardworking fishers.

And the dog sits and waits, and sits and waits to be told what to do. *Stay,  
sit, stay, good SUV. When he returns he will need you to drive him home.*