

***empty lots/***

1.

wanderers eating  
in isolated cars  
concrete spaces  
of a solitary lot –

chew their fat  
like purpose,  
suck out bones  
of misfortune.

dreams consumed  
on time's watch  
human wishbones  
fatten into flesh –

expired vehicles  
overfed by hunger  
save leftover life  
room for seconds.

rare instruments  
at bad timing  
adjust to an age  
out of tune –

*dusk's late shadows  
blot out sunlight,  
streetlamps flare in  
the blind silence.*

2.

*how does one end up here?  
a recurring character drawn in and played out  
over repeating sequences?  
this flickering shadow between passing cars  
looped like an old film reel –*

wait, always wait  
weighing on wait,  
walltowall nights  
peep as keyholes  
wrestling desire

to exert, muscle moment –  
fever's hesitant hours  
sweat out midnight sun,  
prep graveyard shifts  
putting dreams to sleep...

three-quarter noon,  
the day's half way there:  
empty's never light  
and dark piles on weight  
with it's getting late –

wait, always wait  
weighing on wait,  
walltowall nights  
peep as...

3.

these layovers between  
each awakening  
anchor long absences  
dreamt in pursuit,

targeted as outlaws  
spotted by a bull's-eye:  
escape loses ground  
eluding swift affliction

ironing out creases  
furrowed by your traces  
of wrinkles in fabric  
hung loosely on excuses –

*but reason packs light where resistance travels  
to landscape portraits  
luck gambled with accidents –  
illusion's distorted vision distracted from sight  
bleeds beautiful ugly,  
ghosts invention visibly blind...*

false starts jump at quicker ends  
(aye, there's the ole rub out!);  
blind fortune sharpens hindsight  
and stars look like bullet holes.

appetites courted on the sly  
pay hearty fares for free meals –  
ration leftovers of half-lives  
by waiting on tips serving time.

*the days go blind,  
nights swept under stardust...  
can time tell time  
(to live) between the living?*

4.

*and how do you look for someone  
who was never  
there?*

*(an open parenthesis run on sentences punctuates distinction from an out clause*

*in that space separating space, this distance between ourselves, things lost  
in the wild undergrowth sworn to the  
promise their lives gave*

*whoring halls – literature teases leaning on walls, lurid, open-faced  
playing ironically into the hands of the next line:*

*"I've admired your courage"  
"It's always been my pose"*

*you swallow your sex whole gnawing on the nibbles  
skin pierced into bone molesting ideas  
wet for the deep plunge –*

*bottom out at depths fit for desperation  
edges widen scraping the fine-line  
of a messy masterpiece*

*extend without cause or apology  
bounds confinement doubts  
outdistancing certainty*

*reversing my sentence  
with a statement:*

*now there am I..  
I am there now.*

5.

words gag silence  
yelling out loud,  
jolt exclamations  
at knife point!

cutting teeth  
on carving boards  
dissects the hide  
to free its spirit

from midnight rovers  
and dead noon drifters  
rummaging old haunts,  
discards of empty lots

exorcise phantoms  
by engraved invitation:  
intruding bodies  
stripping flesh –

shadows of skin  
slip into bones,  
twilight hunters  
shoot for moon...

*wallflowers dance  
      where devils bloom  
at poetry's last tango  
      for deserted angels*

*dipping tongues inside  
      their naked songs  
lap up all  
      the music lost*

*between the coming  
      and its going  
enslave sweet wonder  
      wet with wild*

*until warm rain runs blood  
      cracking secrets with language  
      over the silence of stones  
          snapping whips in ghost towns...*