

## **The familiar drives**

The familiar drives  
with the odd  
signposts that are just posts and signs  
but mean everything

like *goats eyes* on an ad  
under the overpass where a bus stop sits  
a bench with marketable space  
angled at traffic heading south and slow

when always present

## **Sidewalk cyclist**

Everything says careful  
with her  
bright red helmet, knee pads,  
reflective vest and patient pace.

A sidewalk cyclist  
who rides the uneven cement one-handed  
so the other can wave away the puffs  
from her cigarette.

## **Luck**

I start reading. Stop. Start  
day dreaming. List  
by memory the things  
to do. Before going to school,  
back to the book, the character  
touches his lucky penny  
kept in his pocket  
like my lucky jerseys  
kept in my closet  
and touched three times  
for good luck before games  
sometimes making me late.

## **Nostalgic**

He had never lived outside the city  
but friends who had,  
lived in small towns, told him  
stripsmall, not downtown, reminded them most of home.

Across from school, the community league rink  
he daily drove past  
four or five attached establishments  
vacant with newsprinted windows  
and smiley real estate agent advertising

square footage, opportunity, build your business,  
a future  
that worked better in other neighbourhoods than this one  
designed with nostalgic market analysis.

## Ten pm downtown run

Transit centre departure starts  
at the mall with,  
the dormant till tomorrow department stores,  
    a right  
a left  
to exit the lot.

    A right  
around the Duggan Public Health clinic  
past townhouses,  
a left  
past highrises.

This late with so little traffic, few passengers  
and stops so sporadic, a bus  
driver can sprint  
between bell rung requests and stoplights.

A left  
into Mount Pleasant where the main collector crescendos  
at the cemetery,  
    a right  
down chevrons for sharrows  
past the school, similarly cheery in name.

Pass into Allendale,  
past the strip of dark storefronts,  
the pub lit with VLT in neon.

    A right  
a left  
floor it down the transit only contraflow.

The more soporific routes circle suburban loops  
but tonight's ten pm downtown run is as quiet

to and through *the Ave*.

A right  
a left  
and hair pin  
into the river's valley. Past the rec centre,  
over the bridge - it's replacement under construction -  
past the old burials of the areas First Nations  
to pause, after the abandoned power plant,  
change the destination text  
and begin the return lag south.