

Counter meals

Down the local how beautiful the fellas are on Friday night
all machismo & handsome-haired
with beery smiles, cue tips slicing knuckle-melon, moving at the leisure
of a long unsuccessful game. More bankrupt, each pint-fattened hour
sways like new shoots in soft soil.

By savage junction footy boys slapping backsides, wrapping arms over necks
(St.) Peter –
sainted patron, local of locals, flapping jaw, body tented over the bar.

He'd had a mother to cook for him and was a choirboy
singing the lord's greatest hits -
nearer my god to thee
etc. in high-voiced pureness, loving all the mezzo soprano angels
he was paid for weddings and funerals to sing sing as virgin
as cloudless winter.

Red wine birthmarks this front bar sideshow declining in consciousness
sway like bullrushes, sways and melts like ice on a glass, like ghosts in rooms
like unfolding tendons.

The forking road, a bus wobbling down a prong. An earth digger
bathing in moonlight. Cordoned, cut dirt shines. Where is the driver?
Sunk into a cool frothy, a sea over the rock of back molars.

The meat lives in the freezer beside the chips and seafood special
a frozen farm with no cockerel, the residue of bitterest almond
mating foraged earth on the rim of the plate –
food not eaten with your hands.

This meal is progress acid in the nose dropped chips on the floor and
builders' hands that smell of deep, deep somewhere
south of midnight
north of no centre at all.

