Three Poems

Night Shadows, Edward Hopper, 1921

Home

I recall when home wasn't home, how so same the streets,
buildings' silhouettes, footfall's scuff …
When, penniless, having walked avenues all day, weary to
the marrow,
I found myself, like some spent arrow, in a boxcar, near a
house we'd rented once,
Seeking embers in a grate bereft of fire, safe hearth away
from windward,

warmth on a sultry summer's eve …

But that night was more hollow than in other towns I'd
known,

'cause it seemed I was each anywhere

alone,

a stranger 'midst the props of childhood's stage …

When home was will'-o'-wisp through fingers, I a pilgrim
with no shrine,

bookmark sans a page …

Crusoe on my island of an age—

Late July

On that cant above the ditch, daisy suns give way to
nebulae of Queen Anne's lace;
From verdant tangles blow morning glory trumpets;
nights fret days' edge' like kit pawings

of subtraction.

Summer, two-thirds done, ripens toward fall in
obbligatos of the pretty,
Things appearing, disappearing in fealty to enigma, the
Universe come hither thus along a river's serpentine, its
codas robed in reminiscences …
But these gyre in anxious flocks beneath the mortal
heaven,
Where dread hunger of forgetting stalks each tissue
flimsy …

sachets of memory to be strewn like time

at Armageddon—

Sheaves

One dawn past summer solstice, begins night's undertow.
Though I can't hear it yet, autumn's whispering to the
willows …
Decided by some old law of cradle rocking, some inverted
lullaby.

If asked after a thousand years from June, seek me here,
Where water droplets dropping onto leaves seem strikes
on taborets;
Where a deer's tracks cleave the dew, she having come this
way seeking sweets when dawn was rumor just;
Here, where omens of October coax fog from warm
purlings of river,
And silhouettes fatten into studies of familiar things, half
made icons of the bonny and the plain;
Here, where cadences of world are bound into sheaves by
we yeomen of a sun …

where time droves swallows toward Mexico—