

CHRISTOPHER MATTHEWS

Baghdad Bar

He used drink to blacken glory—always addicted,
this time he went on darkening dirt for glory,
the ramping of dirt on dirt might save the glory
when shadow came shifting down.

So he drank; he was sinking sorrow—even his beer-mat
with the sodden toucan oozed it, shapeless sorrow,
he kept gauging its liquid wingbeat, lifting sorrow,
while Duncan glazed on the schnapps.

That's how he caught reflection—it was like gazing,
the black window in the night bar all reflection,
his wide eye a window scoped out by reflection
and life the bright smuts and blats.

The whole room out there, eternal—that's what it felt like,
Duncan dud with drink but the bar primed and eternal,
then the *boom* thumping them high, who were not eternal,
shedding time as a struck fire sparks.