

SUZANNAH SHOWLER

EXACTLY LIKE YOU'D THINK IT WOULD BE

You can't make this up:

the sky in Buffalo as the train aims into the station,
cones of fog going pointillist, lit in the alternating
wink of beams announcing an arrival flat as a declarative.

Someone is singing *Midnight Train to Georgia*
into the standing silence. We are poised here
like waning birthday candles, resigned, attendant,
our breath like flame spun out into the air,
hovering like an unretractable regret.

This is the midnight train to Kansas City.

It leaves from the part of Buffalo
that's had no heyday, palmed under
and never promised to rum runners.

From the vantage curated by the train's picture window,
you'll witness fields trimmed by a fringe of car shells
airbrushed in colours that have gone extinct,
stacked, half-buried, empty bodies
filling one another and still ringing hollow.

Rust tackles metal's edge like a canker.

This and more of the same will haunt you
across tracts of anywhere.