

Browning's Song

When Ma Deuce falls silent
ice washes through her crew,
fumbles their fingers
while they scramble
to clear the action,
change out the barrel,
or just ram through another belt.

The freezing ache of speed's need
lest some other Moloch
turn its blind maw on them.

The fire of joy when the M2 barks,
hearts pounding to keep pace
with the meat chopper's thunder.

Fire and ice. Freeze and thaw.
Mountains wither under this cycling
in few thousand millennia.
Roads pothole in a single season.

In thirty years, turned middle aged,
they will gather nightly at Jasper's Tavern,
drink to remember, drink to forget,
pick fights at closing time,
because it's better than going home.