

warehouse of souls

check in at the rose motel
no rooms, no service
next to the store front that has a
“curious goods” sign out in front of it

the smell, the vapors of age and decay
knock you over as you
push thru the thick air
and the dim light slowly
equalizes and a vast room of the decayed
and the discarded
forces its way into focus

rows, rows and rows of hats, suitcases
lampshades, signs. silverware, bags
bracelets and chandeliers,
rugs, cups, mugs and canoes,
old chairs, 50's decor wall coverings
tables, boxes, drum kits, cymbal stands,
full drum sets, heaters, barbells and
more suitcases, mirrors and vanities,
rusted patio furniture, ladders, scaffolding,
letter press shelves, various auto parts,
gears, sprocketts, machinery, cigar boxes,
plastic tubes everywhere of every color,
length, material and description...

and it's all sitting there, in silence
and every look is different,
no look anywhere is the same,
every corner, each and every step,
stair, window sill and each and every flat surface
has a piece of something on it, something placed
with deliberation, placed just so...

pieces of glass, pieces of porcelain, blue marble,
squares of great lakes agate, broom handles,
coffee pots, coffee cups, loom slats,
dustbusters, and television sets
 from every era, in every shape
 of every size, color and description,
guitar cases, parking meters, and various
lengths of string, rope, twine, white plastic
nylon rigging, rawhide, combs in the hundreds
combs of every color, size, length and weight,
outdoor grills, habachis, flags, tarps, plastic throws
and cardboard tubes

and in the distant reaches of the dimly lit room
are huge billboards, neon signs,
lettering and type, block type and cold press type
in buckets, trays, boxes and stacks
pieces of street and highway signage, tires for
every car imaginable, truck tires and wagons,
sneakers, shoes in the hundreds,
boots and tools, generators, lathes, chisels
and saws, drills, hammers, dowel drills, augers,
planes and vices, beads and marbles, jars of
papers, stacks of books, magazines, records,
hundreds of lamp stands, silverware, windows
stacked up forever, rugs, desks and radiators,
hubcaps and transmissions, plastic manikins, hats
and fedoras, rows of cigarette cases, lighters and
a plow, a phillips 66 gas pump...

just standing in the doorway
looking into the interior
all these items and lost pieces
are somehow exactly where they should be
now quiet, restful, dark
and everything so close together

packed and stacked
 history upon history,
 story upon story
artifacts crowded together
resting quietly after a useful life,
silently reliving past glories, trips, adventures,
various indiscretions

huddling together in
an obscure warehouse
on a small sidestreet
just below the bridge
in superior, wisconsin.