

*making elbow room for poetry and that
last bus down sergeant*

I used to think that poetry corrals words
imprisons them but leaves enough zigzag space for freedom
ricochet against those sound fences
words that shake, rattle and troll thru meanings
poetry capable of nose-diving cognition
of wrestling words that grapple you by the nose
while the other words, those not chosen, perspective unknown,
are the ferret words wiggling amongst literary canons
sticking in the air like that silver garbage can
alley free from the word rats
at least the right word in the wrong place is alive, is noticed
invites and deflates you across well trained valleys of thought
mountains of BS
guide by walking-thru-the-bush-narrative
some words that might smell the truth
that was poetry I used to think

Now I'm not so sure

Now words arrive like prison jail break
they have to scream red to be heard
scream to be quiet
create rickety mind jazz

while shrill/huckster/hard sell/soft sole words
rocket from those all-seeing billboards
Ads on the bus radio mumble Internet ill-bred spy TV creepy late nite
commercials slap your intelligence
Sometimes even words from actual people
new word age explodes, implodes, and Tec nodes
laser the poet-scapes set your words to stun images must run
hit U over the head overkill words do not count just the space U fill
word fodder for the info age sucks like sour slurpee¹, man, and these
words
they may settle into your poetry
lightly brush your ear lids your mind skids detonate
your inner words pour outer

john wayne's ghost smiles Texa-like in the hot sun

U don't smile back U just reload

Then you catch that last bus down sergeant
mumbling poetically.

Then that last bus down sergeant catches you
mumbling poetically
making elbow room for poetry.

Marvin Francis

¹ Winnipeg, slurpee capital of North America; go figure.