

On seeing Park Lane for the first time

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The Park is hidden, the Lane
a standstill of angry cars.
I lift my gaze above the heave of people,
seeking those elegant houses, luxury hotels
imagined in my childhood kitchen.

I never got a hotel on Park Lane
nor Mayfair. I yearned
for a house on gracious Regent street,
but somehow ended up with Euston Road,
Whitehall, Old Kent Road
occasionally a red one or a useless station.
But never Park Lane
never Mayfair.

We knew he cheated,
snuck on houses and hotels behind our backs,
stuffed bundles of notes under the table, hoarded
the best Chance cards.
We should have stopped him then
before it became a habit he couldn't break.

I stand in Park Lane now,
think about him and Pentonville.
No houses though, or hotels,
no get out of jail free card,
no chance.

Line count: 24