Lost in the City

bricks  slabs  fences  slats
concrete ribcage suffocates
sliver of faint blue sky  an afterthought
or swath the skyline forgot to patch over

taxi infection  street bum hustle
subway at rush-hour  the Black Hole
of Calcutta – was that  one more ghost or
just a drifting takeout bag?

a flashbang of cameras in Washington Square
and pigeon armadas assault bun-crumbs
amidst the chaos a membrane of vocal carnage
*IsaidNoit’sYoutoldOn5thStExcuse*

air thick as the shawl of the babushka
who scrawls an ink map on your sweaty palm
cups change and hobbles off leaving you
always more lost than before leaving
every stray dog or littered scrap your guide

close your eyes and caress the asphalt’s braille
await night for the winking lamp’s Morse code
unravel these signs like a crumpled receipt
of tallied past lives, their sum, and your signature

newsstand  deli  briefcase  gum stain
bus stop  neon  urchins  graffiti

just *breathe* screeches the East Harlem sax
and Broadway curbs sing eidolons while
wept dreams flee from project windows into
gutters  sewers  Hudson  Atlantic