

Register of Historic Places

Anywhere my old man would take me

Stockyards circa late '50s
truckful of cows offloaded
sold and sentenced, their fright
drying on our coveralls

Stink and sound of meat on the hoof

The truckers' restaurant,
cigarette smoke perfuming the air,
loud, soiled men, plates heaping

My old man and me forking in
steaming roast beef sandwiches
mounded with potatoes and gravy
reddened with gouts of ketchup

How's that sandwich? he asks,
gravy flecking his chin

So good, I remember—
a pilgrim to his humble grave—
so good we split our last bread roll
to clean every blush of gravy
from our plates, then leaned back
full in our chairs and grinned.

Darrell Petska
Middleton, WI