

Diorama (the uses of the girl and the location of the 45 buildings)

First: the poorest. Put them downwind. In the smoke. By the water.

Then the finest. Put them up on the bluff,
great grey houses that know like sleeping owls.

In the center, spiraling: the furnace,
the factory, the queen they're feeding, the tooth
they're taking out of the earth's head.
Picture a building in which you tie down the darkness
and work on it with enormous tools.

Next: the opera house, the red and gold.
The sashes and the beautiful, disembodied voice.
Announcements on a wall tell people what's going to happen:
singing, singing, and singing.

Then the boarding house, the school, the church, the store.

Then back to the houses. Establish the various ways
people can see one another.

A town is one pronunciation of an old word. You say it
by opening your door.

At the third house from the end of the road:
a girl running to the front door and telling the charred man inside
to get out as fast as he can.

The charred man inside the house saying no.
He makes a good life for himself out of smoke,
and he gets to start from scratch every day.

In the man's yard, a stump. When it stops smoldering,
a girl sitting down on the stump.

A girl drawing the town in the dirt and tapping her stick.
What she needs to remember: a few feelings to stuff in their hearts
and where the buildings were.