

CAR FIRE

we walked out of
the everything-super-store
and saw a car fire
in the lot

I'd never seen
one before

will it explode?

“don't get too close”
I said

the flaming engine
lit up a decorative tree
isolated in a sea of pavement

people formed a perimeter
holding up their phones
to record the spectacle

we—and everyone else
running errands
on Saturday night—
were given
an unexpected show

how did it happen?

was this the conclusion
to a stunning chase?
spontaneous combustion?
a gang war?

it would have
been less fun
to find out

the firefighters quickly
extinguished the flame
and took down
the tree promptly
with a chainsaw

no one was hurt

(we think)

(well, except the tree)

we packed

into our car

and drove out

weaving through
the spectators

who enjoyed (I guess)
the quiet flickering lights
of police cars

craving some explanation

well, we,
we were less amused

these things happen

and I'm tired—