

Donald Wheelock

Hopper's Gas

The country is a lonely place, at least
when seen before a dark bend in the road.
The season's due to change: the sun-dried grass
might as well be given up for dead.
The crowded trees breathe life into the place,
evergreens, perhaps — so deeply dark —
and yet, those could be August leaves, a wall
of green beneath the dimming summer sky.

How clean, this well lit isle, in 1940,
its pumps aligned to greet the cars
that roll in after dusk, as formal as
a stage prepared for summer's local stars.
The attendant in his vest and tie
sees to some detail we cannot see.

Light leaks triangles from offstage right.
The station building's planted on concrete,
as are the attendant, sign-pole and the pumps.
A cupola adds a touch of fantasy,
as does the leap of Pegasus, restrained,
and headed up forever in his flight.