

Remains

Suggests this is one memory from many like it which add to trauma.

Soldiers are acting under orders - no choice.

On **another occasion**, we **get sent out** to tackle looters raiding a bank. And one of them **legs it up the road**, probably armed, possibly not.

Colloquial tone - emphasises idea that he is recounting this experience.

Sense of guilt - the man may have been defenceless or innocent but soldier will never know now. Plays on his mind.

Repetition suggests soldiers are nameless/anonymous - others don't really care.

Well myself and somebody else and somebody else
are all of the same mind, Under orders - have to do this
so all three of us open fire. job.
Three of a kind all letting fly, and I swear

Bonds the soldiers together -
they are all responsible for
this man's death.

Alliteration - emphasises his vivid memory of the graphic and violent death.

No
identity

I see every round as it rips through his life -
I see broad daylight on the other side.

So we've hit this looter a dozen times
and he's there on the ground, sort of inside out,

Graphic images suggest the brutality of the death - it is these images that the soldier cannot forget.

Metaphor - this is the result of their attack on him.

Informal - suggests a bond between the soldiers - they face the horrible reality of their job together.

pain itself, the image of agony.

One of my mates goes by and tosses his guts back into his body. Then he's carted off in the back of a lorry.

Suggests a lack of care about the looter's life. Matter of fact - he is just disposed of - no identity = not a real person.

Metaphor +
alliteration to
emphasise the
fact that it
stays on his
conscience =
constant
reminder - it
follows him.

The job is done and so it should be the
end - it is not because it haunts the
soldier from this point on.

End of story, **except not really.**
His **blood-shadow stays on the street,**
and out on patrol
I walk right over it week after week.
Then **I'm home on leave. But I blink**

The distance should help him forget - the
'but' shows that he can't forget - it will
haunt him .

Repetition
here - he
can't escape
it - he is
faced with
the man's
death all the
time - adds
to his guilt.

Verb 'bursts' suggests that he attacks the soldier's dreams - he has no control over it - conscience.

Repeats earlier line - soldier relives the event when he sleeps - effect on him.

This is the lasting effect on the soldier - can't escape it.

and he bursts again through the doors of the bank.

Sleep, and he's probably armed, and possibly not.

Dream, and he's torn apart by a dozen rounds.

And the drink and the drugs won't flush him out -

Vivid and horrific nightmares

The soldier has resorted to this but it doesn't work.

Military language used to show how deeply it has affected him - 'dug' suggests it is deep rooted - difficult to remove/escape

Soldier is so affected that he can't escape what happened - even in his sleep = affects him all the time.

he's here in my head when I close my eyes,
dug in behind enemy lines,
not left for dead in some distant, sun-
stunned, sand-smothered land
or six-feet-under in desert sand,

Alliteration emphasises that even though he is away from any physical reminders, he can't escape the guilt and trauma of death caused by him.

It is uncomfortable and disturbing to him.

Emphasises that even though he is away from warfare, he is still affected by it.

but near to the knuckle, here and now,
his bloody life in my bloody hands.

Repetition of 'bloody' to link to horrific death and bloodshed that haunts him. Idea of 'blood on hands' suggests a sense of guilt - to have 'blood on your hands'.

These lines are separate to the rest of the poem - shows the effect on the soldier. He is alone and away from the war but the death still stains his conscience.