

Blaze VOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

Joe Hall

9 *Primus Circumdedesti Me: Return Trip to DC after Helping You Move to Indiana*
Summer, 2007 -

Taxiing again, fight off & slicing through
the cloud banks the night train pulling

thick haze, lifting into
hollow, now

of away

White
or shell

water tower's crown, luminous necklace of a warehouse, acres quarantined

horizon, 2 meridians of washed out blue, bleeding
Margin, the other bright edge

of this is where I try &
receiver, in/of, think or a final

bending
phenomena

Blossom fading into three coordinates
the outlying ripple faltering or

Breaking on in the burnt space

where St. Christopher & my grandfather crouch in
perforated shadows, city withered & eaten as corn in
drought, where, between two occupying armies
your grandfather blows smoke through a dark window

feeling a pattern
which, I don't know why

it does, it blisters

o

St. Christopher, Our Lady of Providence

the houses' pale faces flare up

St. Scraped Frame
St.—

o

The locomotive enters the dim mass

where I'm supposed to think of the end of the body

& the window laying on the bed a honeycomb of light, or is this
where I'm supposed to mention god, the tremor

of a passing freight eating the tracks?

Water spilling from a bent pipe

if the world is a glass tree, is a
The engine probes

the hand in my lap

joints the assemblage steel

& combustible fuel
the earth sails

through an ocean trench, the porcelain darkness

turning in the fragrant heart some body

in response to mine

Lightning & the virgin

white lightning & in
feeling who

foxglove atlas long dress

arrives, oh In soft folds the roofs climb toward the reservoir, the water

tied by the ankles & lowered in broken pottery, grey

Silt of his eyes filmed with rain opening
around the city, rain

crocus

tongues what wound

will close seeing

the virgin in an electrical arc

is the virgin
what wound

When I woke

my ship was in the foothills of a strange mountain
my crew had turned to ivy
the virgin was burnt black

so here I am

in space

The myth of

1 *Version of Occupation 1: Wrecked Sestina*

...

Stolen, rearranged, amended, made, filtering through the air and light of the open door

would you believe Nagasaki was a bowl of doves?

No My grandfather, a Sicilian
standing in half-blackened suburbs, the sign
stamped between the radiation &

his throat: St. Christopher. What do I do?
I work in DC

on a corner of cement, at my ear
carts buckled with flowers, inconsolable
inconsolable Cheryl, you're not

here & can't be
for months, the shuttle of my mind can move
as far as it wants, it only rebuilds us in

gaps, pieces City of
crucified Jesuits staged
from the Philippines, islands where your grandfather thinks through

a typewriter's keys—poems in Tagalog, poems I can't read—
blowing tobacco smoke into a jungle combed
by butchering GIs & Japanese, later Huks

Constabulary, Marcos' forces, scent of ginger
scent of cardamom, Carolina

Jessamine in a plastic lumber sidewalk planter, an orchid breathing in a
bell jar giving fullness to the light
let in by a porthole of a ship of an explorer, a man of reckless movement, lets say

Magellan, looking out past
the long docks of Seville—Cheryl

I'm trying to write a love poem
but the thread slips, rainwater fills

the island's fresh wounds, my grandfather
carries a scorched city home, piece by piece, in the cells of his body

before it clots his lungs

Things of the mind lose their definition

Things of the blinded heart harden
to a green point Through the remnants

our loose bodies begin to gather each other

into a book that is already burning