

Blaze VOX 2k9

Late Spring 2009

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Echoes



Electric blue maiden flies double
on the surface.

Wind—Mike's voice
ripples through

snake-grass, the
reflection of snake-grass,

maiden flies// *maiden flies*—

through my voice—

.....
—opening across,
toward logs, rock

along the bank, but.

Not *just* here.

Also. Skyward.
Threads of

blurred tint.

Wind increases

violet (*disturbance*), violet (*fire*).
That the eye

does this.



Invisible operation of light,
iris, suddenly visible.

Easy to. Concrete as

rock's articulation of
flowers. The retina,

the eye flipping

the matter of
the lake, ecstasy
of location.

Being somewhere and

what breaks the
suspension of surface before—

put my hand
into the water, watch

my face

slide apart in slats.

Tilting the bottle
to just the
right angle

makes the lip

whistle.

In the Living Room

*I will come like a thief.
Revelation 3:3*

*The door to heaven is narrow.
Luke 13:24*

1

Wet asphalt shines behind the coffee shop. Leaves hang black, deep red, green, yellow-green, glistening into shock, into blankness. Rain is just rain, no use in screaming. *Crop duster, biological warfare*—my sister is not afraid of dying. She knows she's going to heaven. My sister, mother, and my brother are not afraid of dying—

I was eight, ten, twelve-years-old when I was saved, but every time I try to feel deserving, a voice behind me says, "It's the small print that gets you into heaven. Don't pretend you are better than anyone."

Sections of river-water rough in current. A rough current of wind drags the cattails.

The voice says, "Stop stalling. You can no longer afford to distract yourself."

2

Morning kick morning, swallow morning—tensions spread like knots in cedar paneling. I can't justify an afterlife that would forget anyone, leave anyone here.

Rough scraps of news stretch static brown water.

We are sending bombers and strike aircraft alongside carrier planes. We are dropping food and medical supplies with missiles. Who are *we*—good question, dangerous question—ask anyone, look in the mirror—

An Afghan girl says that the soldiers shot her mother when she tried to stop them from coming into the house. She pleaded on her hands and knees, and they dragged her out into the yard, shot her in front of the children.

The soldiers stayed for two days and left the mother lying outside.

The living room is all windows.

My mother is taking Sarah witnessing. “Jesus is the Lamp, the Light that *shines in the darkness.*”

They are building our family in heaven. I want to take comfort in this, but I can't stop thinking that the promise of grace narrows into judgment.

I can't stop thinking that choosing one version of God cancels another. *They dragged her out into the yard*—my sister, my mother, not afraid of dying—

My chest is breaking. I lean back on the bookcase. The mug in my hand is cream-colored, ceramic, with a glazed rim and a stencil of red tulips.

The sky is slate-colored, sharper outside the kitchen window. My father passes with a shovel; Mugsy cuts across. Layered in a film of shadows, the bank's composition feels stark, wasted. Sections of river-water rough in wind against the current.

Three hours ago, three days ago—footage of people jumping from window ledges on television, away from the smoke, the fire—

Few cars that sweep past rifle through—*my hand is cream-colored, ceramic*. Everyone jumping falls, but (*but* no one *falls*) through a hole in the fabric. No one makes impact; they just disappear into narrowing perspective point below the camera.

A frame of gold light opens suddenly behind a blur of cattails. The sun shutters. It breaks; it won't go back together.

1.2.06

Early afternoon: thermometer's red needle fluxing between thirty-two and thirty-four.
Windows rattle
at pressure change of wind-bursts. Look out to flat brown water,

ice flows loosening against far edge

drift down-current. Cattails sliding in streaks of light.

Ice stable enough to step out thins to transparency near the bank,
collecting water.

Shredded yellow-brown leaves clinging to the maple's
wet black boughs—

It's your birthday. Hang down over the deck's dull gloss, grill,
garland, and unlit Christmas lights.

The kitchen light in the kitchen window's

high panel. Light overhead, this layering—



Turning the page—

I live far away, in another city, and a balcony across the street makes a triangle
when wind smoothes the fourth corner into flat,
shadowy mess of

branches are hit prisms—