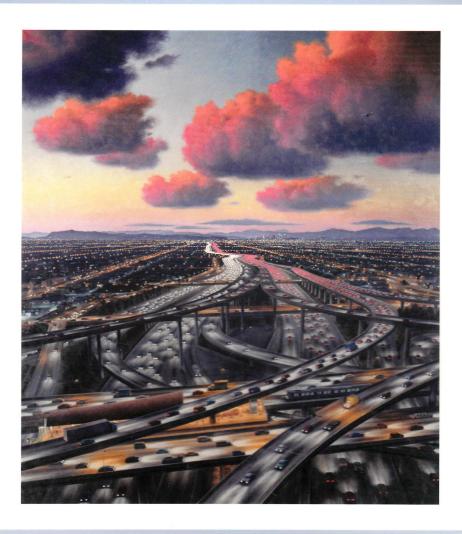
THE

Los Angeles Review



NOAH BLAUSTEIN

John X. Fowler

—Papa didn't have much money

Since the doctor said another surf—the saltwater and adrenaline—could throw you into seizure

you've taken to collecting cans and cashing in your cans to buy pot and working "a little construction"

when its convenient and moving "whatever" around studio sets when you're lucky. But most

of the time it is cans and pot, ninety-eight cents for a 16 oz. of silver bullet and two seventy-five for menthol

unfiltered and free for a bedroll with the other Creekers shantied in the salt marsh. Home

for a week I drove into the parking lot to check the surf, evening glass

off, the moment when the sun leaves the horizon and the wind

dies with the heat and the water goes smooth enough for brown pelicans to skim across

wave faces without catching a wing tip. Yesterday, the hurricane off Mexico

downgraded to a minor squall and made the surf today go flat and the parking lot

empty of surfers except for you, Fowler, your face the color of your cigarette

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NOAH BLAUSTEIN

tip. Fowler, do you remember that wave that left the deep water and morphed into a light

opal as it reflected the cirrus clouds and peaked on the rock shelf in front of me and you, your face,

cut me off. In this lot that is what I see now, your red moon melanoma turning to watch

me fall, "leave skin on the reef," in front of the Sunday crowd. You raising your thigh thick arm to show me

your nubby middle finger, flip me the bird,—fuck off"—this water, this Topanga Point,

is your water and I had no business being here.

Sure, buddy, have a quarter.