

THE  
LOS ANGELES  

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REVIEW



NUMBER 1 ~ 2004

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

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.