

VIRGIL SUÁREZ

Havana Blue

This city will always need work, hands upon it, calloused, a sheet of sandpaper to scratch its own back, what my mother calls *el desrumbe*, flecks of paint everywhere, a riddle for the ashen birds.

This city will always need old men, children in uniform, a knot of banyan tendrils at the park, a white-wash glare, broken glass, windows agape like the mouths of its citizens. Music fills empty

spaces, dead hours blue with boredom. Mojito rum scents hallways, porticos, a bricolage of grid-iron. The sea keeps this secret of blanched sky, birds soar for morsels. A litany of rumors, a clatter

of jackhammers in the moonlight. Slackened days, an ebb, a tug of plunder, what the carpenter knows of wood, a termite's solemnity in dark crevices, pockets of light and shadows. This city will always

stand erect, no matter its conquered history. A man can either aim for the moon, or canoe across its bay to cast empty nets. Questions are for the restless, answers come to those drowning.