

After a Governmental Purge

What! Your old life
 torn, outgrown
 still-vision haunts you?
 Ghost-drifter on a
 charred landscape,
 gray in an old suit?
 (“Am I burned out rat-a-tat-tat?
 You’re sure I’m really burned out?”)

 Zellner, the mortal man
 squatting alone
 or worn-out with
 indelicate boredom
 explores in
 dusty whorehouses
 deep-nervous nights.
 On deeper nights
 who’s in command?
 Or is it like fear
 and accident?
 (“I am not ready —
 I cannot face it yet.”)

 No more winds shadow the
 back eye of the sunset
 No more sound banging God’s wrath
 confirming darkness
 Nothing drops out of space
 to trap further recriminations
 Only the smoke remains.
 (“How many of us are there
 wizened but no wiser?”)

Anne Farrell Bailie