
A Porch Night
Chris Smith

It wasn't the stigmata
or even close to it—
I butted out my Marlboros
on my wrists and when
the burns blistered into scabs
I ripped them off, and it
felt like I was important—
at least for awhile
until my jeans stone washed
stained rusted like
the nails, but it wasn't
my wrists nailed through,
it was my chest pounded
into the porch rail
by the blunt moonlight—
an aqua shaded aura
as if a child had
colored me transparent

with my arms outstretched,
legs crossed at the ankles,
eyes shut in simplicity,
feeling whatever there was
to absorb—oozing
the whatever, hovering
above the Chinese lanterns
floating in the background
of a watercolor dream.