1978

Havana Blues

Henry Carlile

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Havana Blues · Henry Carlile

Tonight I thought of you as I smoked a cigar smuggled in from your birthplace by a senator who gave it to a friend who gave it to me. Why speak as though to someone I could see?

I try to know why fathers leave their sons. Why it is easy to forget—it must be, when you’ve never written me to say you’re well—if you’re alive—and that you wish me well, would like to visit when you have a chance. Were you too proud or grieved? The evidence suggests you were, and so I understand and must forgive. If you would only send a card to say Hello again! Your father. But I’m talking to myself. Why bother?

You might be dead for all I know or care. I care, and yet I must confess my fear is finding you, not knowing what to say. I’m talking to myself, a game I play with words, your face the paper that I press, blank father, ghost! And if I miss you now I miss for both of us. At two, a small imperfect replica of you.