

The shadow's explanation was then
that getting his soul out of the room
God had scorched the window.
My brother suggested that it was like his
brownie box camera. The sun had got so used
to stopping where the old man stopped
that the pane was like film. His reflection
was a positive negative.
Then my mother offered
that the story'd been made to suit the window.
My father looked at her.
My brother went on with his box camera theory.
And I stared, and stared
at the film in my head
that was to hold that image regardless.

Live Wrestling

The Murfreesboro Mauler peels
John Blank out of the ropes, where
he threw him,
and body slams him.
They ride together on the mat
like that for several minutes,
flipping like fish, the Mauler
grinding salt into John Blank's eyes.

They struggle to their feet
like rapist and rapee, Blank blinking
and blanching, the Mauler, mauling.
When a huge man from the studio audience
with sinking ships on his forearms
pops a packet of ketchup in his mouth
and leaps into the ring,
appalling the Mauler and drawing applause.
He goes for the villain

who steps aside neatly and plants a fist
in the ostensible tourist's throat.
The ketchup breaks open;
the fans at home slap their knees
and the announcer stumbles on the word hemorrhaging.
The camera spins around, simulating chaos.
And for a second we glimpse
a policeman lighting his cigarette
and a 10 year old boy dragging
his bawling brother back from the bathroom.

-- Jim Hall

St. Petersburg, FL