

**In Memory of Polish Poet Zbigniew  
Herbert's Visit Los, Angeles, 1971**  
by Katie Farris

*You cannot save this city; you must burn it*  
—Z. Herbert

When he came back to our free union,  
which is to say America, which is to say  
home,  
he was already gone.

He dusted the crown  
moldings looking for fingerprints,  
or more vivid evidences, perhaps an  
insurgent, perhaps an  
arsenal.

Since he returned to our free  
union he kept his mouth inside  
his pants' pocket,  
and his keys sometimes  
chipped his teeth, and this grin  
embarrassed us.

He lost reality; he sat oftentimes abruptly  
down, and splintered chair  
after chair

shouting from his pants'  
pocket to Be careful!  
Get down!

We looked at him

**Commented [rm1]:** "An epigraph is a quotation set at the beginning of a literary work or one of its divisions to suggest its theme." -from poets.org

**Commented [rm2]:** An end-stopped line: "A metrical line ending at a grammatical boundary or break—such as a dash or closing parenthesis—or with punctuation such as a colon, a semicolon, or a period. A line is considered end-stopped, too, if it contains a complete phrase." -from poetryfoundation.org

**Commented [rm3]:** "Enjambment is the continuation of a sentence or clause across a poetic line break." -from poets.org

**Commented [rm4]:** "Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds, particularly at the beginnings of words." -from poets.org

**Commented [rm5]:** "A stanza is a grouping of lines that forms the main unit in a poem." -from poets.org

when he shouted like that.

We would have taken him back,  
but he was already gone—  
gumming benchbacks in public  
parks, knocking on windows

with his forehead, a balding  
bumblebee.

**Commented [rm6]:** "A metaphor is a comparison between essentially unlike things or the application of a name or description to something to which it is not literally applicable." -from poets.org