So you wanted me

To talk about some

Fire I sat next to

On the hour at which the universe first began

In dusty Singapore

Next to the man rolled my cigarette with one hand

While explaining the nature of water

In the canal behind him

Did you not ask

For me to describe the way he held the smoke

Like a passing thing

Like it were his very first

Or very last

Delicate and intangible taste?

Or did you want

To see the shanty town over the hill to our left,

That seemed to breathe in the early morning wetness

And heave itself awake of its own volition

Some amalgam eastern spiced golem

Grown out of the marsh the muck, mire and

Entirely too early to be awaking it stretches like

A lazy cat

As smoke curls up like whiskers, curry

Cooks collectively in kitchens across the canal

You wanted to smell it, I think

You wanted the long boat ride

Hull and heaving ships across the big pond

Fondly asked me to tell you the texture

The taste on my tongue as the grit was kicked up from the cheap cab

More rust than paint, salty and stained white on the edges

From the sea

Wanted me to faintly line the picture so

As not to take away the majesty

By mentioning the toll booth and

The lightly armed guards precursory glance

The feeling of not being perceived as a threat and

The subtle emasculations of sailor’s uncaring gait as they

Leave for dives, having deposited me

Your requested poet so

Unceremoniously in

Singapore