HAVEPOETRY.COM

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HOTEL CENTRALE, ROTTERDAM

I am awake between stiff
sheets tonight in room thirty
four, listening to the heat
tick through the radiator,
seeing a television
pour out news of the war
the war in the air, the war
in the Gulf. The walls vibrate
with video light. This is
no room for sleep anymore.
There is no room for dreams.
The shooting stars on the screen
are as real as a rain
of fire can be, falling
on some other city. And
here I have a star’s eye view
— the glide toward the intended
target, the blink of a bridge
into nothing. Do I want
to see that again? I do.
Who am I now? Where? I want
to be in that blue leather
armchair down in the lobby,
talking with the people there
about the stories we’re in
this city to tell. But now
they’re using their several
tongues to question the news and
I want none of that, want not
to fall for it again. I
am trying to fall asleep.
Those people keep on asking
all night through. Where are the wives?
How much is lost? Just what is
the story? In that, a small
glory — like that glow, say, down
below, as my overnight
flight ended, a greenhouse bright

as day, a dream suspended
in the blue and frost of dawn.