

36.

SEAN LAUSE

Thomas Null, machine 36, the hole-puncher,  
was secretly apprenticed to despair.  
I thought he was wise, since he laughed at silence.  
Then one day he disappeared mid-shift,  
and I found him dead on his front porch swing.  
It was only when I walked his route alone  
I saw the cruel genius of his escape.  
Saints & Sinners, No Answer, The Alibi,  
Utopia—a bar on each corner.  
He must have seen he could drink his way home.  
His eyes had captured something of the sky,  
lonely angels still clinging to the wind.