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## The Blind Man's Poem

Frances Kuffel

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## THE BLIND MAN'S POEM

I tell the woman on the Hector Street bus:  
what I really want to see is a dancing bear  
balanced on the high wire, strutting across  
dusty air like a final roll of horns. She laughs  
& speaks of Picasso & the Himalayas. These are the great  
gestures, foreign to my thick books. Times Square  
at night, I reply, my neck swanning out of my collar.  
I want night. I want to taste it like popsicles;  
I want to stand in Times Square under the traffic of neon signs  
& the night will stick to my fingers, fall in stains  
down my chin.

The sighted insist on the worlds I have found,  
as though I live the waxy fluttering of a cherry blossom  
with no need to see its blush or its place among so many others.  
They think that only I can single it out,  
possess it best with my four sharp senses.  
& that if I had my choice, I would lie for hours  
under the cherry tree & watch the scuttle  
that is the visible spring.

If I had my choice, I would sit  
on a closed toilet watching a woman as she bathes.  
I would bring her soaps, glowing & various,  
so she could wash herself slowly, a cat drowsing on a winter  
morning. The cold seeps through my jacket, porcelain  
or the window behind me, as the bus swerves again.  
This is my blind man's career: to juggle the dark against the light,  
to make them both my own. I've become a collector of the absurd  
prancings of an animal above me as he snaps his parasol  
shut with a flourish I call grand.