

## **A Celebration of the Arts**

Poets, dancers, musicians, singers,  
painters, paupers beg  
on bleeding knees  
at the foot of dreams. The muse  
watches as the artists  
push thigh deep through the  
wingless angels in  
a winter storms. In summer rains  
they part the mist-filled fog  
cup the tears of creativity.

Paupers living in squalor,  
church basements,  
taking refuge in libraries  
to keep their bodies warm.  
Work for pennies  
to pay rent, buy macaroni,  
sell their bodies, a few pieces of art,  
words of poetry they recite  
to four people.

Paupers unable to pay  
for prescriptions, dental work,  
glasses. Shop at the Sally Ann,  
line up at the food banks.  
There is no bank account, life  
savings. No insurance. Bus pass.  
If the paperwork for mingy grants  
passes the muster of critical eyes  
and serious competition  
mouths will be fed.

Darkness is invasive  
Consumes the heart with drugs,  
alcohol binges and yet  
the artists' muse hangs on walls, dances  
in theatres, sings on stage,  
collects on shelves  
while they feed on the leftovers.

People pass the busker's  
guitar, violin, or harmonica.  
Making a living on finger bones.

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