

Regulars

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Regulars on the bus
are artists
but don't know it—
static graffiti
always sitting in the same place...

The woman that wears the winter hat
in the summertime
is mostly invisible to me,
but today the spot on her
patchwork dress bothers me
even more
as if I wasn't immune
to urban blight in all its subtle forms
like women who could be goddesses
if only the world was blind.

I mind
my own business
curiously wondering
if the spot is
food or blood or, God forbid,
some other bodily fluid...
or just a blaring figment of my imagination
taking up visual space
window space
air space—
larger than life in the rush hour rumination...

Get lost,
her eyes say
as she chews
on the best of her memory...

I spit back with mine.

She stabs me with her gaze.

I bleed.

She writes on herself.

I squint to read it.

Now we're buying and selling,
trading karma like marbles or baseball cards...
like little girls with scabs playing jacks...she smiles and
rings the bell.

My eyes escort her
smelly-disgusting-gaudy body
off the bus
and into the pristine summer rain...

I have lost my friend.