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The Newspaper Man

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THE NEWSPAPER MAN

Glen H. Brown

Do you know the old man who
sleeps in the newspaper hut?
He smells like freshly spilt ink.
In the afternoon he sells magazines.
In the evening he has the news.
When it rains, small inkwells
lie at his feet. When it's hot,
the sidewalk becomes a dark indigo mat.

All day long he sleeps upon
the affairs of men. Every night
his ankles turn ulcerated black.
What does he care if someone
is robbed and strangled in the night?
What does it matter to him
if minimum wage rises a few cents?

If you try to talk to him
he doesn't answer but
only mumbles through his thin crooked lips
as he hands you a newspaper
that would have been his pillow.