

Learned Behavior

A Poem

Al Taylor

If I was a good person, I'd know to carry cash.
Holding sweet, slick bills and bucks,
Tightly, so I may greet the homeless men that fill out the corner
On Lemon Street.
They don't ask for much—a dollar or two—
A favor, or three, whatever I need to make them happy in this world.
If I was a good person, I'd pour out my wallet.
Spend all my time on coffee dates and luncheons,
Use all my energy on straining my mouth so wide,
As to keep them entertained.
I open my mouth like a baby bird,
Did you know that turkeys can drown in the rain?
They don't know to look away from the droplets,
And let their throats fill with sickly sweet sap,
Tears and thunder ricochet down their tongues,
And leave all the turkeys to drown.
If I was a good person, I'd clean my room.
Keep it tidy, so the rats and beetles can swarm
Infesting my trash and staying over till well past midnight.
Even though I have an eight am meeting tomorrow.
I sit with the bugs and watch myself crash. And repeat.
Maybe one day I'll be good.