

Peter Krok – Two Poems

Hands Out

With their shopping carts, baby carriages,
bags of belongings, they come
to Galuska Pennypacker Memorial.
When a truck comes, they gather
in a broken line for a meal.
Sycamore leaves grumble as passersby,
walking on the sidewalk, avoid their eyes.

Clarence accepts his food and leans
against the bronze statue.
His blood-grained eyes stare
As if a mist smears his vision.

After finishing, Clarence points
to my cigarette. I give him one.
He lights the Marlboro, looks
at the ground and mumbles,
The devil is in the bottle
And I can't get rid of the devil.
He turns his head and repeats,
The devil is in the bottle
And I can't get rid of the devil.

Thousands Of Tears: The Streets Of Kensington

They come here
to the darkness slipping
In and out of cars
getting off the el
craving

They come here
Strangers eying strangers
No one knows them by their names
Names without faces
Faces without names

They get what
they are looking for
And then they part
to rooms and alleys

Too many fall and can't get up
The siren comes
their heartbeat a flatline
The fire and the ashes
The ashes and the dust

---- the silence bleeds