

The Old Dog (in response to Brian Warfield)

by Jane Flett

Blend your sugar crystals with ice and feed the paste to the old dog on the corner. His aluminum eyes won't look up; he's passed on humping those winking calves.

Tell the dog not to worry—soon the weekend will be here. Tell him soon. Soon the working week's over and Friday's latchkey fingers will lock the internet away. Soon, you'll be your own dancing bear and find the circus yourself. Soon.

Roll over another mutter on your tongue and feel it squeak between your teeth like tired halloumi. You're not old enough to let your limbs feel this ransacked by the puppeteer. You're not black-eyed enough to lose yourself in the blank void shape.

Blend the dog a drink and sit down beside him and draw straws for regrets. When you get the short one, don't stumble. Drink through it. Drink.

