

Abundance

by Jerry Ratch

A young woman in shorts
removes her sunglasses,
putting them on top of her head
in order to study the little girl
sitting on her father's lap
on the bus.

"I want to get me one of those,"
she says, with her dark eyes
smiling. Dark hair wet and hanging,
fresh from a swim
somewhere on the West Side,
while the bus keeps heading uptown,
past a man sleeping on a
stack of tires in Hell's Kitchen.

She has dreams about you
sitting with her on warm nights
in the little park across
from the Magnolia Bakery,
with a long line out front,
eating banana/vanilla-wafer pudding.

One of her favorite things, that and
kissing you in her dreams.
How much you love it when she
says that! Or if she asks:
*When are you going to
write me a love poem?*

Maybe her eyes are crossed
when you make love.

Maybe they are focused
on the inside
of the universe.

Maybe she has a dream where
she's eating a fat purple fig
that's as big as a watermelon,
holding it in both hands, and
putting her whole face into it.
When she comes up for air, saying
it means: *Abundance*.

And suddenly a man bows his head
and crosses his chest
before crossing the street,
and the rain keeps falling
on his bare blue shirt,
and the taxis will not stop.

While a woman sitting
inside a café arches her back
and thrusts out her chest
for all the men to see,
and she places her palms
at both sides, underneath,
for she is pleased with them.
And the men admire
the abundance God has
provided.

Then the illuminated hands
say to go forth,
and the light says: WALK,
and the taxis wait for all to pass.
And everything begins moving
forward again, from this world

into the next.

