

Good Deed Punished (Matthew IV)

by Mathew Paust

Mornin', Bub,
were, you recall, the first words;
they seemed to startle him,
the neglected, conquered head creaking up
from its fixation with the sidewalk.

Rheumy eyes sizing you up,
something mumbled,
an exchange that became routine
when you met on Main Street mornings;
geniality attends these constitutional walks.

Hit you up in time, disappointing,
claimed homelessness, you called the lie,
assuming correctly he lived at Cary House,
argument--denying, whining;
disgusted, embarrassed, you gave him the inaugural dollar.

