

We All Have That Moment

by Martha Plaehn

Everybody has that moment,
When we're driving down the road,
talking about our impossible amount of math homework
or that awful song on the radio,
we look out the window
and we see someone,
a man,
sprawled out on a park bench,
with an BI-LO bag lying next to him.
we have this one moment of sadness,
why has humanity gotten to this?

But then the car drives past,
we go back to the song on the radio.
but that man doesn't go back to his house,
that man does not have a warm bed and a full stomach when he goes to sleep at night,
that man will never be like us.

We might want that man to leave our lives forever,
we don't want him to leave a dent in our perfect lives.
but every time we drive by that spot,
I promise you, we will look,
and every time we're on that road,
we will think,
and every time we're in that section of town,
we will regret.

So we flee.
We flee until we find a place where that man stops chasing you,

you flee,
because it's so much easier to run away
than it is to help.

We flee,
and we're happy.

Because we fled to a place where tourists drive SUVs around town and shop all day,
to a place where people marvel over fancy restaurants and beautiful views.
When you ask someone to recall a trip to Asheville they say that they couldn't imagine a more
picture-perfect town.

But what they don't realize is over 563 people are on the streets
each night in Buncombe county.

What they don't realize is that over 100,000 people in these picture-perfect mountains don't get
three full meals a day.

What they don't realize is that,
in Asheville,
everybody has that moment,
when I'm driving down the road,
talking about my impossible amount of math homework,
or that awful song on the radio,
I look out the window,
and I see someone.

A man,
sprawled out on a park bench
with an BI-LO grocery bag lying next to him.

I have this one moment of sadness,
why has humanity gotten to this?

But then the car drives past,
I go back to the song on the radio,
but that man doesn't go back to his house.
So what am I going to do about it?