

Leftovers

by [John F. Deane](#) in the [June 26, 2013](#) issue

The old man, out and almost-down, reeks
of dank doorways, of unwashed clothes; sits

by the church steps, a Styrofoam crushed mug
held up for coins; he sees us, indistinctly, shades

garnering small graces at his expense; hurt heron,
will sleep tonight in a cardboard refrigerator box

withstanding weather better than we do. Here,
underneath the layers of dirt and shabbiness

there is vulnerable flesh, its valleys, its portals
sacred as our own. Behind the blank though watchful

eyes, beyond the scars and stubble and beneath
the matted heron-grey topknot of his hair

there is a mind as friable as ours, and a soul
sought for by the wandering, the forlorn Christ—

heron, God's loved leftover bird, slow to lift
out of muddied waters into a doubtful sky.