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Ice Man (for mami 1905-1975)

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Ice Man (for mami 1905-1975)

On a single day, when the sun had gone walking
she ran. She ran past the crooked wooden porches and the old men on
stoops, past concrete lamp posts with their balls of milk glass and waited.
She waited on her splintery swing seat and listened for him,
for the wheels ticking, the ice man.
His whistling tune so familiar and soothing
to breathe the sweetly dusted notes.
Clothes flap in the breeze behind her
as he unveils the brown tarp--
then, on his leather padded shoulder rests the frozen block--
its blue icy smoke churns around him, a banner of white light
which then slips, like tears, into space.
She leans in the cart to slide some crystal shards
into her palms, the shimmering liquid drops ripple down her throat.
She presses her face to the block of blue crystal
longing to crawl inside and live.

Anne Mulligan