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quietly...

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quietly...

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quietly

I observe old ladies on the bus
old ladies
with fuzz on their checks
and whisked breath
who hold tightly to their dogs
and boldly strip young men
straining at their leashes

billious in lace
they cackle deeply
in goitered voices
and claw toward their canes
through yellowing gloves

they blink seductively
like circus clowns
who have swallowed eggs
of snakes
and they fall to sleep
vacantly
to be filled in in dreams
like wilted
powdered flowers in a vase

MIKE GOODWIN