A Blind Fisherman

By Stanley Moss

I teach my friend, a fisherman gone blind, to cast true left, right or center and how far between lily pads and the fallen cedar. Darkness is precious, how long will darkness last? Our bait, worms, have no professors, they live in darkness, can be taught fear of light. Cut into threes even sixes they live separate lives, recoil from light. He tells me, “I am seldom blind when I dream, morning is anthracite, I play blind man’s bluff, I cannot find myself, my shoe, the sink, tell time, but that’s spilled milk and ink, the lost and found I cannot find. I can tell the difference between a mollusk and a whelk, a grieving liar and a lemon rind.” Laughing, he says, “I still hope the worm will turn, pink, lank, and warm, dined out on apples of good fortune. Books have a faintly legible smell. Divorced from the sun, I am a kind of bachelor henpecked by the night. Sometimes I use my darkness well—in the overcast and sunlight of my mind. I can still wink, sing, my eyes are songs.” Darkness is precious, how long will darkness last? He could not fish, he could not walk, he fell in his own feces. He wept. He died where he fell. The power of beauty to right all wrongs is hard for me to sell.


Source: God Breaketh Not All Men’s Hearts Alike (Seven Stories Press, 2011)