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Circle

Dean Hamlin

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Circle

Dean Hamlin

The night is cold and empty,
The rain is only wet;
My breath is only moving air,
My life is like a debt.

My skin is like the sidewalk,
My eyes are only here;
The darkness that surrounds me
Seems neither far nor near.

Why do I wait for something
When nothing's all that comes;
Why do I wander Main Street
And meander through the slums?

"I live, is all," I say aloud,
With no abrupt reward.
The murky sky ignores my cry;
The street pays no accord.

Failure looms before me
And taunts me from the past;
I don't believe in destiny,
But that what's cast is cast.

"I live," I cry aloud again,
Yet what do such words mean;
When relief means not desiring,
And to be means having been?

I decide to die a thousand times,
And fail to find a way;
And only see that the world
Is growing older every day.

When sleep means only waking
To find another day,
With no place left to go,
And no place left to stay.

When memories are torture
And future means "go on,"
And the steel and concrete world
Will feel no difference when you're
gone.

The night is cold and empty,
The rain is only wet;
My breath is only moving air,
And my life is like a debt.

Dean Hamlin is a member of the Portland (Maine) Coalition for the Psychiatrically Disabled. His poem first appeared in Pile of Papers; Stack of Karma, a collection of poetry published by the Portland Coalition Press. Reprinted with permission.