

A Man with a Paddle

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A man stands at your intersection
wearing a baseball hat
holding a canoe paddle with a hole.

His eyes follow passing cars
begging for a night of warmth
or a dollar bill for his pocket.

He stands for an hour, ripped clothes,
sneakers with no soles, but full of soul,
as he slides into the next corner

amidst rush hour traffic, as hungry drivers
dash to their homes, and take no notice of this man
who has had none for at least five years now.

Where did he get this paddle
and what does it stand for in his world
where leisure time spares itself,

and streets are where he lays his head
and here he empties his bowels
of whatever scraps a nice person
may have, tossed his way
on another gloomy day?