

At Night in Charleston

Though you might not be aware of him
A turtle with majolica shell
Swims laps in the aquarium
While a janitor with his red hot brow
Polishes the floor with grit and might
In the lobby where gardenias
Catapult their scent
Into the indigo swamp of a night
On the peninsula
Bearded trees on bended knees
Court the houses
Chaperoned by battery walls
Encouraged by the urgent seas
In the market one last carriage ride returns
Drawn by horses wearing thin
Like a slave ship from Africa
Sneaking in