Found in the Street

Richard Bronson, MD

You were dead drunk, smelling of piss, swollen toes bursting maggot-filled socks, legs a mottled sea of cellulitis.

Soaks and antibiotics, a sheltered week of rest, a haircut, a shave revealed a man my own age!

In the intern's bright office, a cloistering darkness around us, we talked past midnight, two guys in our twenties, as the city murmured through an open window, the ward of sleeping men our witness.

We offered what we had, found you a place to address your addiction; for the one task required—to arrive on your own—we gave you the means, ten bucks placed in your hand to travel by bus out of the city. Clean but not healed, ten bucks burning your pocket, you left our care and I wished you godspeed.

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