



## Circus Man

His name was Daniel and he had  
no one but knife-throwing eyes  
pachyderm skin and tobacco tar hands  
to speak for him.

His legs were thin as wires having  
outrun lions pinned in the end  
by tumors trampling  
his heaving chest his airway  
closing like a fist.

He could not raise  
his voice had never  
learned to write could only  
nod

I understand,  
If you take the tube out—

or No  
I have no family  
or No  
I do not want a priest  
and Yes, goddamn  
I understand  
I understand  
I understand

We took it out—

And he never revealed how a man  
swallows flame, how to sleep  
among cats, how to fall  
from a train

He just shuttered his eyes leaving  
only his name, which  
was Daniel.

By Gaetan Sgro

Illustration by Taylor Hollingsworth

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