

# The Minister for Exams

by Brian Patten

When I was a child I sat an exam.  
The test was so simple  
There was no way I could fail.

Q1. Describe the taste of the moon.  
It tastes like Creation I wrote,  
it has the flavour of starlight.

Q2. What colour is Love?  
Love is the colour of the water a man  
lost in the desert finds, I wrote.

Q3. Why do snowflakes melt?  
I wrote, they melt because they fall  
onto the warm tongue of God.

There were other questions.  
They were as simple.  
I described the grief of Adam when he was expelled from Eden.  
I wrote down the exact weight of an elephant's dream.  
Yet today, many years later,  
for my living I sweep the streets  
or clean out the toilets of the fat hotels.  
Why? Because I constantly failed my exams.  
Why? Well, let me set a test.

Q1. How large is a child's imagination?  
Q2. How shallow is the soul of the Minister for Exams?

