

The Freezing Artist

by [Joshua C. Frank](#) (April 2024)



Starving Artist Getting Warm by a Painting of Fire
—Teun Hocks, 1990

The Freezing Artist

Based on the painting Starving Artist Getting Warm by a Painting of Fire

I'm warming my hands by a make-believe fire—
I hope to fend off old Jack Frost by a feint,
Pretending that somehow I'll sate my desire
By staring at yellows and reds mixed in paint.

I can't sell my paintings, I've nothing for spending;
I can't keep a job, so I've nothing to eat,
And somehow, I can't just warm up by pretending—
I'd rather burn wood for some actual heat!

But wood can't be had, so it's back to the acting,
Imagining warmth on my freezing-cold hands.
I'll soon paint some food and some friends for distracting
Myself from my life in these cold, windy lands.

Under the Umbrella

Inspired by "Le Parapluie" ("The Umbrella") by Georges Brassens (1921-1981)

Rain fell in waves throughout the street;
A woman walked with no umbrella.
I offered mine; in voice real sweet,
She answered, "Thank you, sir. I'm Stella."
She dried her young, angelic face
Under my umbrella space.

I stood with Stella, side by side.
We heard the rain sing *a capella*,

A pretty choir chant outside,
Atop the roof of my umbrella.
Oh, for forty days together
To hear the concert of the weather!

Yet sadly, even in a storm,
Midnight strikes for Cinderella.
Rain stops, roads go, and that's the norm.
Foolishly, I'd hoped that Stella
Would stay; instead, she went her way,
Shrinking as she walked away.

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Joshua C. Frank works in the field of statistics and lives in the American Heartland. His poetry has been published in *The Society of Classical Poets*, *Snakeskin*, *The Lyric*, *Sparks of Calliope*, *Westward Quarterly*, *Atop the Cliffs*, *Our Day's Encounter*, *The Creativity Webzine*, *Verse Virtual*, and *The Asahi Haikuist Network*, and his short fiction has been published in *Nanoism* and *The Creativity Webzine*. His website is [here](#).

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