

## **The Chairlift to the Edge of the World**

There's a chairlift to the edge of the world.  
Everyone rides it at the age of thirteen.  
I had quite a ride - solemn winds swirled -  
and I sat beside infamous Elmer Eugene  
(who's shifty smile was considered obscene).  
He twitched as we passed over cities of rust  
'till his eyes seemed to focus on something unseen  
And he spoke with a voice like billowing dust:

“Here, kid, is the edge of everything,  
or so they'll tell you, back over in town.  
But I think their certainty's all whittled-down.  
The truth is: edges ain't worth a damn thing.”  
With that, Old Mr. Eugene, grinned, winked  
and leapt off the lift into the indistinct.

## A River of Faces

Amidst a social distanced sojourn  
peeking between the pines  
I saw a semblance of something  
drifting on the river's tides.  
I felt betrayed by reason  
– felt its steady grasp subside  
as I gleamed *five floating faces*  
taking the whirling river for a ride.

They ebbed into an eddy  
and I jogged up right beside.  
They spoke, in turn, with voices  
Croaking timbres, sudden cries.  
I bent like a doubtful patron  
as they swirled and met my eyes.

“Spend your days just misbehaving,”  
an old woman's face declared,  
- wrinkled like a wood-engraving  
It grinned at me and stared.  
“Deviate and doubt and disobey  
and revel in the gone-astray,”  
she sputtered,  
as the current took her underway.

Next churned forth polished face  
That smelled of aftershave  
“Be disciplined, deliberative  
in your day-to-day”  
It said, with a stock-photo grin  
“The line between sloth and  
satisfaction, has never been more thin!”

“Im new here, I'm new here!”  
hollered a wide-eyed face,  
drifting in and out of leaves.  
It seemed a bit misplaced.  
“How is it that these others  
summarize with grace  
a whole life of moments  
profound and commonplace?  
...I can surely conjure  
something wise and urgent  
Just give me...” it's mouth  
was swept beneath the current

“There’s nothing here but figments  
that you’ve conjured up alone”  
said a new face with shipwreck eyes  
and a weary sort of groan.  
It flowed over a shallow rock  
and spun-out down below.

And then I saw my own face,  
spinning lazy circles all alone.  
It was silent as a crucible.  
It did not speak-out or moan.  
It’s eyes seemed to adjure  
Till it slid out on it own  
Into the vast obscure.

I rose, I breathed, I balanced  
on the scoured bedrock shore  
and went right back to walking  
looking for something more.

### **The Sanctity of Sinister Spaces**

Have you traveled to where the boardwalk ends?  
Have you been driven by that primal urge,  
to sit by yourself where the river bends  
and swallow up that bullfrog's dirge?  
Have you seen snappers laying eggs in mud?  
Have you dangled your legs in the mire  
and laughed at the leeches sucking your blood  
while you swing out your doubts on an old tire?

If you haven't then come there's much to see!  
In the place where becoming comes to be.  
In the place you've seen on black plastic screens  
when your mind wanders somewhere dark and green.  
Lets flee from the well-lit faces  
into the sanctity of sinister spaces

## *A Ballad of Spiders and Wasps*

In an old school house, in Vermont  
during a deep November chill  
some spiders and some dying wasps  
mingled on the windowsill.

I dug my hands in pockets  
dug them up to the wrist  
and stared down at the creatures  
wondering how they coexist.

Wasps staggered forth against the glass,  
looking out at sunlit space,  
sputtering without a food supply -  
soldiers sinking down with grace.

While the wasps moved belabored  
all the spiders hung about -  
patient little consumers  
waiting for wasps to lose their clout.

The spiders spun the fallen ones,  
methodically adept,  
hanging them up like mobiles  
as their quarries slowly crept.

Webs hung low with mummies  
and the wasps lurched and fell.  
I watched them die for hours.  
I heard the twitching knell.

All around the school house  
the scene was much the same.  
Every windowsill exhibited  
the same malignant game.

I was inclined to pity,  
the wasps so diligently doomed -  
hounded by the window's light  
all their capacity consumed.

But in the end, we spiders  
cling tightly to our thread  
and in the spray of dawning day  
we weave our nets for the dropping of the dead.

## In The Desert

There's a nameless woman that you may meet  
When you have traveled miles and miles from home  
And carry yourself like a dusty tome  
And just when the sands have blackened your feet  
She'll stand like a lonesome thick stalk of wheat  
Speaking like some sort of oracle-gnome,  
She'll ask, "Do you even know why you roam?  
Why, in *not*-knowing, you feel so complete?"

I mention her not to warn nor to plea  
Just a strange figure I've seen in the sand  
When I've gone out directionless, no map in hand  
If you meet, do answer her honestly  
With a laugh or a howl or nothing at all  
Just let your all answers be wild and tall.