

## Covered Bridges

I am my father's son, walking in time  
with my father's face printed on my skin,  
looking through the eyes of stories  
told on kitchen table evenings.

As a boy he strode barefoot on dusty days  
of humid summers, in green farm country,  
down to where the broad brown creek  
passed by endlessly in tuneless murmuring  
where the bridge groaned to the weight  
of car and carriage, echoing traveler's voices  
in the timbered roof-space among rafter oak  
and swallow's nests, in cool rising air.

Worn wooden planks spanned the bottoms  
of shoeless feet under the roof-shade,  
above gliding ater on it's long journey from  
mountain meadows and Pennsylvania coal towns.  
In high noon heat, cold currents came down  
between grassy banks, over moss-slick rocks,  
where wary brown trout lurked in  
deep eddies while above stealthy fishing-boys  
waited, patient as hunting lions.

I am my father's son standing in time  
with my father's face gone from sight  
on the harsh summer days where the bridge  
once stood on the humid shore waiting  
for the sons of country boys to come  
stalk the deep running fish.  
The strong oak of past seasons gone,  
the floods have left only foundations,  
standing still, in place, showing  
the character of so much weather.

## **Buoyancy**

When I feel how the river of time  
carries me along in its strong current  
I watch the sandy bottom glide by  
and see the present ,  
firm and unbroken.  
But I think of the layers from eons uncounted  
and wonder at how they have shaped the course  
of my path through a universe that counts  
me as a mere particle shifting with a current  
that I can not direct. I can only reflect  
that I am still afloat and have always been  
a swimmer between the shores  
of an uncertain future  
content to drift the quiet stretches,  
between the rapids,  
to find my fortune  
one ripple at a time.

## First Love Goes Viral

I wonder, if I were young  
in this year of plague,  
you know like before  
I was in my prime  
and the life of juggling  
was still to come,  
would I be likely  
to fall in love at first sight  
from six feet away.  
Like I did that day  
long ago by the river  
when a blind girl asked my name  
and my eyes became hers  
all in a moment.  
Could I see the fine person  
beneath the N95 mask  
If I had the nerve to ask  
would I show up  
with roses in rubber-gloved hands  
and say that I liked hers  
with delicate fingers  
showing beautifully  
beneath tight-stretched latex.  
How would we find the magic moment  
when PPE must fall  
and our souls bare all  
with courage and passion  
in spite of the pall  
making it hard to see  
the ones we long to touch.

## **Summer Night Discovery**

Once we lived on the stoops  
on hot summer nights.

Mom kept the lights on bright  
to see what we were up to.

Heat lightning traced the skyline  
and mirrored the electric desires  
of our fevered age.

Our fire was not rage.

It was ignited on the pages  
of revealed knowledge

showing us our brightest colors  
and urging us to slip into the night  
where all we could see was each other.

## **Getting From There To Here**

I am at times a stiff-necked fool,  
a tool of my inner urges.  
There were times when I served  
the worst of them  
and spread my apologies  
behind me like a trail of regrets  
through a landscape of lost wishes.  
Raised on dreams and muttered prayers  
I had no one to be  
except a feather in the wind  
looking for a better wing  
and learning that flight is just  
deciding not to land.  
And that my one true love  
is the ever receding horizon.