

Southern Idaho Summer

Michael R. Collings

I was six.
I wheeled Grandpa's milk cans out
to wait like patient soldiers for the cheese truck.
I strutted in a new red and blue
corduroy cowboy suit.

(Korea was over.)

I raided raspberries,
squishing succulence on my tongue.
I slaughtered alfalfa-straw snakes in overgrown fields.
I rode stick horses at full gallop
across the log bridge, risking tumbles
into nettles and polliwog-slime.

(Viet Nam was yet to begin.)

I fished for six-inch whoppers.
I slept-out on rusty springs,
waking when a 1940s Ford or Chevy
or Nash crunched the gravelled road.
I stared at stars, not yet myopic enough
to need glasses.

(Sputnik was an engineer's conception.)

I rode with Grandpa to deliver eggs,
flats of eggs on the back seat,
warm-stuffy, gray seat-pile in front,
a green translucent spinner on the steering wheel.
Four hours to Burley and back —
a ninety-mile trip.

(The moon rose untouched.)

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