

Roller Coasters

The rain came down in droves
Days without end
A heavenly holocaust
A tempest in a teapot
Whose spout was ever open
Pouring down
Leaving the river so high
You could nearly drown
Walking by its banks
Toward the bend
That was fast disappearing in the mist
The place where off in the distance
You could barely make out the outline
The object of your bliss.
But the roller coaster
still arches into the sky
above the river
Storm or no storm
It is the ultimate high
The first was the Cyclone
A mile or more of braided white timber
A rickety ride that would have kept us limber
If we hadn't rushed to Batman
and the Mind Eraser
Hairpin, high rise turns
Upside down chasers
We couldn't stop laughing
Or we actually might cry
Finding the courage
To live and to die
Then came Superman
The man of steel
And we needed nerves made of it too
To scale its deadly heights
But it was closed because of flooding
On this gray day that seemed like night
Was that relief I saw sweep across your face
Obscuring a hint of fright?
We ride Pandemonium twice
A sideways twister
Later you give me your rings to hold
As your fingers blister
From holding on too tight
And finally letting go

Your pale blue eyes glisten
With excitement and pride
We are masters of our universe
And queens of the ride
We try our hands at games too
You win a lion
And I win a cute blue dog
I say he's blue because it's so damn cold
You giggle and say you're warm
Is it just that I'm old?
The rain closes the park early
And we pig out before heading home
Where we while away hours before the fire
Before it's time to go
I give you my blue dog
To give to your sister
But you keep giving it back
And finally I get it.
It's not that you don't want her to have it
It's that you want me never to forget it
This day we had scaling thrilling heights
And death defying lows
In a soggy amusement park
We could call our own
And I think I like these rides
Because they're a lot like life
A dizzying array of highs and lows
You can stay safely at home to wait out the rain
Or you can throw caution to the wind
And get on again and again
As I hug you close before you leave
I hope you never stand to the side
That fear in your chest
Is a sign your alive
And I'll keep the blue dog
And the fond memory
Of my rainy day at Six Flags
With my niece Eileen