

## Small-town Fair

A Ferris-wheel turns, revolving endlessly  
Each capsule a private Sailing Ship,  
Transcending space and time  
Passengers enter this magic shuttle,  
Launching into the cosmos,  
Life's troubles reduced to a spec  
In the streaming Infinity behind

Flickering lights shoot white lightening,  
Arcing and buzzing across the Magic-Wheel  
Its Hypnotic spin slows time, as strollers pass by,  
Nameless faces shuffle and blur,  
In the unfocused frame of a tired eye

Neon carnival signs blink, crackle and hum,  
Children rush with tickets in hand to twirling rides,  
Hustling along narrow, creaking, wooden ramps  
To Yo-Yo swings and Mile-High slides,  
Riding and gliding they close their eyes for a real magic carpet ride  
Screaming girls race down the ramp in a frenzy,  
Loosed from the spooky, swinging doors  
On the backside of the Haunted House

A thousand giggling Faces and Forms multiply,  
Darting through endless silver passages  
And rounded corridors leading to nowhere,  
Reflecting in the Maze-of-Mirrors,  
Trying to find a Friend, never knowing for sure,  
Which one is real and which is an Illusion

Carousel music plays from a Marching Brigade,  
A man with a handle-bar mustache crashes huge Symbols  
And leads the score, the Tuba thunders, Harmonicas sing off-time,  
Weaving whimsical notes around the Mysterious Harpsichord

Step behind the red velvet curtain,  
Where a Carnival Monkey with special talents wears baggy pants,  
Dazzling crowds night after night,  
Snatching popcorn and shiny quarters, in the blink-of-an-eye  
From a child's outstretched hand,  
Hiding the prizes in his pockets,  
Tipping his Hat with a grin,  
His gold suspenders sparkle beneath the stage lights,  
Applause and tiny tokens are his reward,  
He takes a bow to End the show as the crowd roars

Candy apples glisten,  
In perfect bright red rows,  
Sparkling beneath beaming heat-lamps  
Cotton candy spins weightlessly in thin air  
The swirling mass bursting into giant sugary pillows,  
Spinning magically in a young boy's Eye  
Into fluffy pink and blue honeycombs

Salt-water taffy swirls whimsically, behind the window glass  
Fascinating arms of shining silver extend in languid revolutions,  
Pulling long, chewy strands of Reds and Purples and Greens  
Into the Timeless Taffy Machine

Frozen expressions stare transfixed, reflecting amazement in the glass  
As the man rolls out fluorescent Cherry and Lime strips  
And stocks the candy barrel with Chewy Peppermints,  
Candy gum balls, and Incandescent pieces of Taffy Treasure

Buttered kernels churn in a blazing kettle,  
Exploding like gunshots and popping over the brim,  
Couples dash to the Popcorn Stand on a whim,  
Grabbing striped tubs of this buttery, salted delight,  
Then disappear into the crowd,  
Sharing laughter and popcorn in the strolling Softness of Twi-light

Kettle-corn rumbles and tumbles, spilling from huge metal baskets,  
Shaken together in medleys of Caramel Delicacy  
Salted Peanuts steam in the roaster,  
And Candy-coated pecans are  
Twisted fancifully in warm cellophane packages  
Displayed next to an over-sized candy jar  
Filled with multi-colored Rock-salt sticks  
And Translucent suckers of flavors unknown

Wayfarers and lonely romantics  
Meet on the Midway, joining the vibrant pulse,  
Getting lost in a kaleidoscope of Sideshow and Ski-ball  
As electric rhythms bounce  
And prizes are won  
A Clown is dunked in the cold-water plunge  
And a swinging sledgehammer  
Drives the Mercurial Weight straight to the moon,  
Ringing the bell atop the vertical pole as High as the stars  
While savory aromas escape funnel cake baskets  
And drift from corn dog stands,  
Floating away as Fantastic Phantoms into searchless night,  
Mixing with so many sounds and sights

Ascend to the stars for a bird's eye view of this sparkling majesty,  
Taking flight above crashing bumper cars  
And twirling teacups, looking down on a speeding roller coaster,  
Its flaming blue lights shooting tracers into the night,  
Legs dangling from on top of the world,  
Sailing high on the scented winds of the Sky-ride

And crashing back down to earth, from the spiraling Tilt-a-Whirl,  
A couple boards the Majestic Ferris-Wheel,  
Believing what they feel will last forever,  
They take their first ride,  
Absconding across the night,  
Falling through magical hemispheres,

**As willing victims of love-at-first-sight**

**The Carousel spins,  
Face touching face, in warm embrace,  
They hold on tight,  
Clinging forever to this treasured night,  
Of candy apples' gleam,  
And roasted peanuts' steam,  
Creating a Memory that remains vivid  
Long after the Carnival Lights fade**

**By Chad Little**