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## The Rockbridge County Fair

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# The Rockbridge County Fair

Main street is blocked off before sunrise  
to get ready for the chew spit  
chocolate ice cream drippings  
and broken plastic forks useless for pies.

Wooden booths and card tables rub shoulders  
holding ten pound belt buckles,  
honey sweet as honeysuckle  
and the first prize melon, big as a boulder.

Farm hands emerge from every John Deere  
to try their bronze arm at dropping  
the Mayor deep into a tin tub, sopping  
wet, his toupee swimming clear from his ears.

Bluegrass rules the day and shuts down the night,  
when even the drunkards can't stop  
their toe tapping to unscrew the top  
off the first bottle of Jack Daniels in sight.

Dirty little hands squeeze the life out of hotdogs  
and hamburgers dripping with sweat  
from the grill, where the men won't let  
no one near what they're poking in the charcoal smog.

Feet start to get tired and wallets real empty  
that's when the lawn chairs fold  
the blacktop turns hot to cold  
and all of Rockbridge County heads home in a Chevy.

The sun sets orange-red to the west of a front porch  
settled in a valley of fresh air  
moonshine and old men who swear  
to seeing unidentified flying objects steal a horse.

– Morgan Roper '94