

Happy Birthday to Me

by Cary Briel

Happy Birthday to me.

It takes just a second on waking to remember,

It's June but it feels like December.

I roll from my bed,

spin to my feet,

stand and walk to the window

to see if anything's changed.

Little things—

the grass is a bit longer, but not so much from yesterday.

The fence, it's weathered,

but it's been weathering forever.

And the street, its pavement that looked so new,

just one year ago,

now is cracked in its length

And its full breadth—

its edges, at places, caving into the ditches.

This all reminds me of something.

Ah, but why try and remember?

It's June but it feels like December.

My father once said,

you've a long way to go,

when referencing some age he'd held

like a job

at some firm,

with floor after floor rising into the clouds.

Before he climbed one floor too high,

And I never saw him again.

From this window, the sun's rolling in,

and the breeze,

summer air,

its smells strip every care.

It's been doing this for men

like my Dad and I,
for millions of years.

Just feet down our road
there's a lake, carved deep in the soil
by masses of ice, which I'm positive
fanned out to the very place where I stand
Slowly cutting the world that I see,
left, right,
every feature in sight,
into being.

I imagine myself in a lawn chair,
sitting atop it,
riding this ice like a madman,
as it creeps inch by inch,
Forging new reality
for the next generation of riders.

