

A Bum and his Shopping Cart, Giving Up his Ways

by Jerry Ratch

**A bum leaves his shopping cart
in the middle of the intersection
at 7th Ave and Perry St
and walks away
leaving everything behind**

**Shopping cart gets hit
by an onslaught of
yellow taxis whizzing by**

**The contents flying out
into the humid afternoon —
two cans of lost
childhood
one box of forgotten
dreams,
three empty beer cans
from the early 60's,
a box of unused
typing paper**

**He is giving up his ways
Sworn off picking through
trashcans
for partly eaten pizza
slices
and the artichokes of the past
one hundred years**

**Tired of trying to reason with
the playful rats who are after
the same slice of pizza**

**And as one last gesture of good will
toward a laughing God
he just does not understand
he gives up swearing off
things altogether**

