

Walking the Ridge
(For Sandy Sidar, 1945-2009)

Summer 2009

In the white gold summer of fifty-three	C G D G
Our stories not yet sung	C G D
We walked in fields fresh and free	
With the blind heady wisdom of the young	
Camped in groves of cedar where Indian grasses blow	F Am C G
Sheltered underneath a broken bridge	Am G D
Until the high wind called you where the red-tails go	Am C G C
And you went to chase the mystic, walking the ridge	C D G

We were the best of companions when the winds allowed	
Driving up north through the rains	
Singing songs of freedom, laughing at the crowd	
Marveling how well they wore their chains	
Barefoot on the coals of conviction	
Burnishing the shackles of desire	
Two old cons caught up in their own fiction	
Two ravens wobbling on the wire	C G D

We'd stoke the fires of memory when you needed a place to hide
From whatever questions called you to the edge
And even in the garden, working side by side,
Your restless heart was out there on the ridge
 On the day I die I'll see those fields, rosebud in a glass
 And see us taking refuge at the bridge
 I'll see you ride the hawk wind, heading for the pass
 And hear your laughter echo, walking the ridge

Alexander George Sidar III, my closest childhood friend, lived two blocks away from me in New Jersey. We were "elective affinities" as much through T.S. Eliot as through Boy Scouts, and we remained close for fifty years. In the 1970s we played music in a Broadway bar and on the streets of New York, styling ourselves for a while as the Heartrock Express. I sang this song in 2009 at his memorial service.