

Stair Case

By Josh Smith

It begins familiar.
Dark, musty, but comfortable.
Somewhere amidst the laughter,
The smiles begin to grin
With teeth too big.
The eyes sunk in.
The stool jitters, then lurches.
I'm on a wave
Crashing up and down
Much to the delight
Of these cackling mad.

I grow sluggish,
Heavy enough to
Stop the movement.
Stool sinks to the floor
And I get up.
Or fall off
And haul my suddenly
Leaden form
Towards the back.
A familiar staircase
Comes into view.
I can picture the small apartment
Of a friend
Beyond the door at the top.
I begin my ascent,
Or at least I try.
I move slower
The farther I go.
Balance falls victim,
I slam against
The walls of this staircase,
Though it is by no means
Narrow.
The maniacal laughter
Returns at my back.
It closes in.
A glance down the stairs
Reveals a grin
And sunken eyes.
He just stops and stares

But I push
With all my will
To make it
Up these steps.
I strain beyond my capacity
But I remain there,
Unable to move,
Stuck to the wall,
Halfway up
This staircase.

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