

Carousels for the Kids

Takao, mid-1980s

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GOT UP EARLY

Got up early, climbed the mountain
 and saw the orange sun.
 Saw the yellow butterfly,
 heard the streamlets run.
 Saw the turtles swimming
 in the pond so deep and blue.
 Saw the frogs a'hopping—
 I'm hopping with them too! [hop, hop]

SUNUP

The sun's coming up
 like a big ripe persimmon.
 The light's pouring down
 like juice from a lemon.
 The horizon's the color
 of apricot jelly.
 The blueberry sky
 looks just right for my belly! [tickle, tickle]

WHY CAN'T I FLY?

Why can't I fly?
 I don't know why.
 I try and try and try.
 But I can't fly.
 So I sit here and cry
 “My, oh, my!
 Why can't I fly
 like a bird in the sky?”

The birds can fly.
 But not I. [flap, flap]

IF I HAD A CANOE

What would I do
 if I had a canoe?
 I'd splish and
 I'd splash. [paddling arms like a canoe]
 I'd swish and
 I'd swash.
 That's what I do
 if I had a canoe!

What would I do
 with my own helicopter?
 I'd wheel
 and whirl. [spinning around like helicopter blades]
 I'd tweel
 and twirl.
 How I'd like to adopt her—
 my own helicopter!

What would I do
 on an elephant ride?
 I'd tramp and
 I'd tromp. [stomping like an elephant]
 I'd stamp and
 I'd stomp.
 I would look quite elegant
 on my very own elephant!

I WAS BORN IN A JAIL
 (spoken verse by Hugh, 8 years old)

I was born in a jail.

 I didn't have a mother.
 I didn't have a father.
 I was eating cars and trucks.
 I was eating televisions.

I was born in a jail.