

Elijah Wyman

"Why We Never Go Swimming"

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In the summer of '56
your grandpa built that place in the sticks,
and your father tells the story
of that rope swing at the quarry.

How he tied it up
the day he fell in love.
He could climb the tallest tree.
He was the man of your mother's dreams.

In the summer of '87
your brother went to heaven.
He drowned down in the quarry.
At least that was your parent's story.

Well no one goes to that old quarry anymore
because your brother's ghost drank it dry straight to
the floor
saying, "As sure as rain, as sure as sin, as sure as we
fall down
no one will die, no one will drown no not in my town."

Up until the day we left
your father's dreams were plagued by death.
You could hear him in the darkness crying,
humming, drinking, and lullabying.

On the day we hopped that train

your father went to the quarry again,
and he climbed himself the tallest tree
and wrapped his neck in that old rope swing.

And he was swaying.
And he was singing.
Son I'm coming,
in just one more swing.

Well the rope went taught and then it snapped. His
body fell down.
Through swollen cheeks, over purple tongue, water
poured out.

He said, "Son I will, I swear I'll fill this quarry back up
because each drop you drank in death I used in life to
fill my cup."

About as sure as rain, about as sure as sin, about as
sure as we fall down,
that quarry filled straight to the brim, straight from his
mouth.

And he was swaying.
And he was singing.

As sure as rain will come with wind,
As sure as love will conquer sin,
son I am coming

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