

Sonnet Scroll

Why I Lie

By Robin Helweg-Larsen

When hitchhiking, inevitably tasked
with answers to “Where from?” and “Origin?”
I lie to simplify the tales I’d spin
if my odd background really were unmasked.
(The childhood travels, seas in which I’ve basked;
prep school: Jamaica; teen years schooling in
a former English palace, slept where Queen
Victoria stayed . . .) because then I’d be asked:
“Why hitchhike? Spoiled kid! Don’t lie! Get out!”

Therefore, of course, I have to cut some slack
for other riders with unlikely tales:
big boosters may have nothing to boast about,
while quiet ones may not want to go back,
whether to jobs or spouses, wars or jails.