

8 Maxims for the Hickory Road Ghost

1.

He appears on an old dirt road. How and when  
no one in town is certain. Some say the moon  
when it's splinter thick has something to do with it.

2.

He appears on an old dirt road. No need  
to feel fear, but there is fear. What kind of face  
can be seen by many, but described by none?

3.

He appears on an old dirt road in the middle  
of August, on Christmas Eve, on the day the geese  
leave, on nights the flowers choose to stay open.

4.

He appears on an old dirt road. Not just to anyone,  
he's a choosy ghost. Only appearing to those  
slightly lost, or those with a slight ache in the back.

5.

He appears on an old dirt road. To follow him  
off the trail. Clothes tossed aside by the pond.  
He wades through the water looking for something.

6.

He appears on an old dirt road. One popular theory:  
A ring of keys was found in the pond. He's a janitor  
or a grounds keeper who can't pass on with empty pockets.

7.

He appears on an old dirt road. Another popular theory:  
He drowned himself in that pond and sometimes the night  
remembers and reenacts the story for an audience of one.

8.

He appears on the old dirt road. The air turns cold  
and the crickets shut up. He'll follow you down  
that old dirt road. You'll be scared and he'll be nothing.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Cameron Schneberger lives in Chicago, Illinois. His work has appeared in the *Minetta Review*, *Yellow Chair Review*, and *NonBinary Review*.

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