

The Bum and His Shopping Cart, Giving Up His Ways

by Jerry Ratch

A bum leaves his shopping cart
in the middle of the intersection
at 7th Ave and Perry St
and walks away
leaving everything behind
Shopping cart gets hit
by an onslaught of
yellow taxis whizzing by

 The contents flying out
into the humid afternoon -
two cans of lost
childhood
one box of forgotten
dreams,
three empty beer cans
from the early 60's,
a box of unused
typing paper

 He is giving up his ways
Sworn off picking through
trashcans
for partly eaten pizza
slices
and the artichokes of the past
one hundred years

 Tired of trying to reason with
the playful rats who are after
the same slice of pizza

And as one last gesture of good will
toward a laughing God
he just does not understand
he gives up swearing off
things altogether

