

# Welcome to Sparks

Sun Kil Moon

Roadtrip to Sparks, Nevada

I walked into the bus station, there was a payphone in there

It didn't work, but it was nice to look at

Enclosed in vintage ash, nostalgia, nostalgia

Payphones saved my ass so many times when I was young

Saved me from getting mugged over at the corner of Turk and something

Rain was pouring and guys were closing in on me and my new year's flame

I told her, "make a call fast, I got your back" and within a minute, up pulled a taxi

Well, the funny payphone memories from when I was younger and dumber

I once called my dad from a roadside payphone in Tennessee when I'd fallen in love

I told him, "Dad, I've fallen in love and I'm getting married."

He humored me and said, "How long have you known her?"

He was chuckling

He said, "Well mark, let me know when you've planned your wedding."

A few weeks later I wasn't with that girl no more

I could hear in my dad's voice on that payphone that I was a smitten, pussy-whipped kid

I didn't know it then, but my dad did because he was my dad, old and wise, and he knew me better than anyone else did

From there, a short trip to Reno, Nevada

The bus station was closed but I was so happy to see people of color gathering

They were sitting on benches outside the bus station in downtown Reno

The sun was glaring on the cement, contrasting with the fall of Sierra snow  
Cat mountain

I saw three payphones inside but the cops wouldn't let me in

I said, "Can I please use the payphone and get a sip of water from the water fountain?"

They said, "Hey you, move along."

And when I left I saw a nervous young man crying

A lost soul with nowhere to go, he'd just been dropped off at the bus station

People were advising him, telling him about small welcoming towns and making suggestions

The cops said, "Everybody beat it. Everybody get lost now. Move along."

As I walked back, I said, "Hey my friend, here's some cash, grab it quickly", and that he did

Who knows what happened to him, maybe he found work on a privately owned exotic animal zoo

Maybe he hitchhiked his way from Reno, Nevada to Kalamazoo, Michigan

Maybe he's traveling from bus station to bus station

Maybe he's fine, I heard a woman telling him that she'd pray for him

And from there we drove to the Truckee River

People were picnicking, happy as can be on that April afternoon

I climbed half-way up an overhanging tree where I stood and took a picture of the slow-flowing Truckee river

And from downtown Truckee, we drove through Donner Pass

Where people ate each other up

And further down the 8 to Emigrant Gap

When we pulled in, there was a long cabin-like structure

She parked while I stepped outside and took a peek and saw people watching a strange film

The portion I saw was a close-up of a woman's skin

A kind man stepped outside and said, "How can I help you sir?"

I said, "I saw a sign for a payphone at the exit."

He said, "That payphone's been gone a long time."

I said, "What's going on in there?"

He said, "We're showing a film because of our absent lecturer."

I said, "Is he absent because of certain guidelines?"

And he said, "Yeah, we're showing a film instead, maybe drop by another time"

I said, "What is this place anyhow?"

He said, "It's a rehabilitation center. A 13-month program ranging from people with drug and alcohol problems and also for people suffering with depression."

I said, "Now, that part interests me, now you've got my attention."

He told me the website when I left, he said "God bless you and safe travels man."

I said, "What did you just say?"

He said, "Yeah, that's right, we're a Christian-based program for 18 years old and older."

I said, "That's a very large age span."

He said, "Well, 18 is adult."

I said, "I see, just like prisons, when you're 18 you share the same structure as senior citizens."

And I said, well, he knows, one day, he could have counted me in

"I'm intrigued by the part about depression, but I'm not interested in the part about your religion

Plus, it's too close to where the Donner Party happened

Plus, this place kind of reminds me of The Shining."

He said, "Well, nevermind you, I didn't come to you, you came to me, you knocked on my door, I didn't knock on yours."

And I got in the car and I asked Caroline, "Does this place strike you as the kind of place, with 13 months of time you'll be healing

Or does it strike you as sort of cult-y, in that kind of time when the snowbound place could mess with your mind?"

And from there we ended up in Colfax, and ordered pizza

And we were mesmerized by a young lady twirling pizza dough

And two lovebirds behind the counter were giggling flirting

While working away on their many pizza orders to go

Young love is so beautiful and painful and mysterious, wondering, where will it go?

Will she go off to college and meet somebody new and break his heart while he's back in Colfax sprinkling cheese on pizza dough?

Will they have five children and live happily ever after in Colfax, who knows?

Will they leave town in an old Honda Civic and get married somewhere along the Pacific

And live in a house in Mendocino with a yard full of abalone shells?

And get divorced, and she's chasing him down for child support and alimony

Well, young love is so beautiful and painful and mysterious, where will it go?

Young love is so beautiful and painful and mysterious, where will it go?

Young love is so beautiful and painful and mysterious, where will it go?

I said, "Thank you, Caroline, for this road trip to Sparks and Reno

It was nice to go to the American and Truckee rivers and skip stones

And to see old payphones, and to drive along 6-foot high mounds of snow."