

## Las Vegas Strip

In a crowded elevator  
in a Vegas casino,  
a drunk cowboy in a ten-gallon hat  
and pink cowboy boots,  
says, *I wish I was in Texas,*  
and a few of us laugh,  
but he turns to me with a menacing look  
and says, *Did I say something funny?*  
His friend says, *Let it go, Teddy.*

I'd already lost some money  
and this made me feel worse, but

still I had an interest in Vegas.

Highway 91 and the Strip were jumping.

I knew the history. If you were white,  
back in '31 you could get lucky  
with a pair of dice at the Pair-o-Dice.

All you had to do was throw the dice.

There Sammy couldn't stay,

Sammy couldn't eat, Sammy couldn't gamble,

but he and his daddy could entertain them.

So could Duke with his big band,

but he couldn't stay or eat or gamble.

We got into the war in '41 and

El Rancho Vegas threw open its doors,

and the Strip was born—the Riviera,

Caesars, the Nugget, you name it.

In the '40s and '50s

Bugsy's had Spike or Satchmo or Stooges.

The Strip dimmed the lights when

Elvis and Sammy and Dean and Sinatra

flew off to the stars becoming light.

Clarence Major