

## Vertigo

A deadly affliction  
for Navy pilots and most others,  
especially at night  
when the horizon is murky,  
moral compass leaves true north,  
attitude gyro bends,  
wings not level

unbeknownst to me until:  
“Navy Two Bravo One-Seven-One,  
Wave off. Wave off.  
You have drifted off course.”  
As I turn seventy,  
the rudder shakes, stall-warning blares,  
after-burner ignites,  
I try to level my wings.