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CALIFORNIA

A JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

QUARTERLY

BEN FIELD
PHELPS PUTNAM
LARS LAWRENCE
RUTH V. GOODWIN
MARTIN LUBNER
BERNARD RAYMUND

DON GORDON
RAY SMITH
THOMAS MCGRATH
BRUCE DUFF HOOTON
GEORGE ABBE
DON GEIGER

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A CLEAN 6 X 9 READING EDITION

From the 1855 Preface gives this issue its argumentative center, with Walt Whitman setting the terms. The fiction—The Little Jew, My Brother by Ben Field; Mightier Than the Pen by Lars Lawrence; Cry Baby Cry by Ruth V. Goodwin—moves among private crisis, social pressure, and public consequence, with each story's title and setting supplying a distinct point of entry. The poetry runs from Eight Poems and Poem, shifting between grouped poems and single lyrics rather than settling into one house style. The printed contents bring together 4 works of fiction, 10 poetry entries, 1 prose or editorial entry, giving the issue a deliberately mixed pace across genres and forms. The result is a compact but varied record of the issue's particular moment.

This edition resets the journal's literary texts for reading. Each piece begins on a fresh reader page and identifies its original journal page and PDF scan page; advertisements and decorative matter are omitted. Artwork and irreducibly visual material appear as labelled original plates.

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Notes on Contributors

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WILLIAM S. ALLEN has had poems accepted and published by more than thirty magazines. A resident of New York City and Florida, he is now engaged in writing a novel.

BEN FIELD, one of America's outstanding short story writers, is the author of three books, The Cock's Funeral, The Outside Leaf and Piper Tompkins. He contributes to our pages for the second time.

DoN GEIGER is a teacher at the University of California at Berkeley. His poems have appeared in THE CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY, Western Review, Perspective, Poetry, Interim, Experiment, Folio, Beloit Poetry Journal, Arizona Quarterly and others.

RuTH V. GooDwIN, born in Albany and a graduate of Syracuse, has "written off and on -mostly off-for many years;" but now that her youngest son is in school she is writing more consistently. Cry Baby Cry is her second published story.

DoN GORDON has been a frequent contributor to our pages. He is the author of two volumes of verse, Statement, 1943, and Civilian Poems, 1947. A third volume is in preparation.

BRUCE DuFF HooTON has studied at the Academy of Arts and Southwestern College, and at Harvard. Now employed as a printer in New York, he has seen print previously as a journalist. Winter 1950 is his first published poem.

LARS LAWRENCE, a former teacher, is engaged upon a long work of fiction entitled The Seed. The first volume, Morning Noon and Night, appeared in 1954, and the second will be issued by Putnam in the fall. A previous excerpt was presented in our Spring, 1952, issue.

MARTIN LunNER is a Los Angeleno who took his M.A. in art at U.C.L.A. An instructor in painting and composition at the New School of Art, he has exhibited in the school's gallery as well as at the Los Angeles County Museum.

THOMAS McGRATH won the 1954 Swallow Poetry Book Award with his just-published volume, *Figures from a Double World*. His international position as a poet was won by his earlier books, *To Walk a Crooked Mile* and *Long-Shot O'Leary's Garland of Practical Poesy*.

PHELPS PuTNAM (1894-1'948) achieved his reputation in the '20's and '30's when his verse appeared in the *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, the *American Caravan* annuals, *Poetry* and other journals, and his two books were published-Trine in 1927 and *The Five Seasons* in 1931. A third volume was in preparation at his untimely death.

BERNARD RAYMUND, the sage of Safety Harbor, Florida, had a story in our last issue. His work has also been published by *Tiger's Eye*, *Story*, *Decade*, *Arizona Quarterly* and other magazines.

RAY SMITH has published a volume of verse, *No Eclipse*, and received Poetry's Guarantors Prize. His poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Epoch*, *Western Review* and many other periodicals.

EMILE SNYDER, born in Paris, arrived in the United States in 1941 and spent two years in the U.S. Navy. Now a teacher in the French department at U.C.L.A., he has an M.A. in Comparative Literature from Harvard, where he worked in modern poetry under Archibald MacLeish.

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The Little Jew, My Brother

Ben Field

HEY, You, bring good milk for my little brother. Hey, I said once: 'Hay is for horses.' 'I'll give your nose a kick in the pants.' 'Choose a man your size,' begged the milkman, backing away in terror. 'I said milk for my brother, do you hear?' The milkman flew into his truck and ducked behind the crates. 'I hear, B.Z., I'll bring your brother a whole cow, but don't hit,' he begged. 'I break easy, B.Z., don't hit.' 'I'll make, I'll make.' 'All right.' He released the wheel and dusted his hands. 'But remember: 'I'll remember.' The truck moved, the bottles ringing and singing, the milkman dancing and bowling, steering with one hand and holding his belly with the other.

The boy gave chase. The truck was too fast and outdistanced him. He stopped between the trees which his father had planted, both with iron fences around them with signs in Hebrew and English: "The Martyrs of the Furnace" and "Rebirth of Israel.' He shook his fist. "Make fun, make fun.' Puffing up his chest and holding his arms away from his body, he whipped around and with a swagger entered the house.

He heaved up the stairs, his finger on his lips, and moved down the hallway. Everything was dimmed, hushed, the air stinging with medicine. He stopped at the door of the bedroom. The blinds were down, with one sligh! poke of light lying faintly on the floor. The nurse, a cap like a tent on her head, was bending over the table covered with bottles, boxes, books. From the bed where the sheets made a hill, not a sound. He bent his head. The hill stirred; now out of it issued hoarse breathing. His face creased, and he stuck [3] out his hand to touch his mother, then caught himself in time. With a groan, his head on his chest, his fists clasped behind his back, he began to pace up and down the room.

The nurse jumped, squealed and spat three times. "Mr. B.Z., you scared the living daylights out of me!"

"What's the trouble now?" whispered the hill wearily. "Mommy, the little brother don't come,' he shouted. "It's your fault, nurse you. You don't give her enough to eat. Give her so she should become fatter like

the pussy Charley keeps in my daddy's restaurant. Give her so my brother'll come. Do you hear, dumb schicksa goyische?"

"Ben Ezra!" cried his mother in consternation. The nurse tittered. "A thousand times everybody laughs. The milkman laughs I want milk for my little brother. The partner in my daddy's restaurant laughs. She laughs. The whole world laughs and makes fun with my brother. Wait you!" He hooked his arms away from his body and advanced menacingly on her, brought his head down, and started shooting punches.

The giggling nurse retreated to the other side of the table behind the boxes and bottles.

Disapprovingly his mother studied him out of her swollen face. "Is that the way the smartest boy in his class behaves?"

"The strongest, mommy.'" "And the strongest.'" "It's for my brother. Everything is. Understand?" "I understand. It's been such a long, long time for you.'" She sighed. "Your father has a new partner, soon your brother will come, and we'll be together again. Nurse, will you get his comb and brush please? Why did you run away from Mary this morning when she wanted to help you wash, Ben Ezra?"

"I rakatzed myself.'" She held out her arms. "Come, what is rakatzed?" "Oh, mommy, that's in Hebrew like in Jewish when they don't want little boys to know. Tata Grandpa and the old men in daddy's shul, they say rakatz.'" "Yes, rakatz.'" She smiled faintly. "But you've put your shorts on the wrong The nurse came in with brush and comb. "I told him he's walking backwards, he'll always be where he started from. He told me he'd give me a puck in the face, and show me.'" "Stubborn the way our men are;" murmured his mother. The smiling nurse patted her on the arm.. "Come, Ben Ezra.'" Ben Ezra approached. "Only the head.'" He craned his neck, and she began stroking his head. "This way;" and as he took her hand to show her, she snatched him to her and kissed him with a moan. "Do you see, nurse, why in spite of everything I love the men of our house, I love our little fathers?"

[4. The California Quarterly J Ben Ezra pulled away. "I said only the head. Understand?" "I love the rest of you, too. The head isn't all, darling.'" "Only the head;" he ordered, standing before her, arms crossed over his bare chest, buttocks and belly bulging his boxer's shorts, his black hair as stiff as bristles in spite of her brushing.

"I see I must be satisfied with the head;" said his mother, throwing a despairing glance at the nurse who spilled all over herself with laughter.

After a few strokes Ben Ezra wheeled and headed for the door. "Where are you going?" called his mother. "I got business;" He tramped down into the basement and passed through the kitchen. Mary stopped her humming and looked up from her ironing. "If it ain't B.Z. himself in the flesh and the glory, looking high and mighty like the gabby and sexton of his daddy's synagogue;" Her dark face spread out into a great smile. "Man, oh, man, sound the trumpets!"

Ben Ezra scowled. Holding out his arms as if he had a great ball between them, he moved down on her. "You making fun, too?"

"I hope not;" She snapped and pinned her lips together, rolled her eyes heavenward, and studied the matter. "No, I ain't;" "All right, so don't bother me;" "All right, so don't get torn and dirty, man. So don't go climbing that honey tree or I'll have to sick your daddy onto you. You give your me another scare they'll have to bring that big iron bottle for her again. You don't want that?"

His face creased, and he shook his head. "If you mind, maybe your dad'll take you to the restaurant and you'll see that wonderful great shakes, Charley;" "No fooling?" "Not even so much;" She measured off her thumb. "Charley, Charley;" he sang and bolted into the garden, staggered around in circles, and then squatted down at a safe distance from the tree.

The tree, taller than the house, stood up against it so that a branch like a long thick finger poked at the window of his bedroom. He had taken a little girl from his class into the garden to show her that he could get the purple S-shaped pods hanging at the top. Frightened, as the tree swayed, the little girl had started blubbering, Mary and the nurse had come rushing out, and his mother had gotten sick. Maybe that was what had kept his brother from commg.

After the little brother's coming, he would climb the tree right up to his window and to the roof. He must see what was on that roof. This was a real tree, not like the two out front which were no bigger than his grandfather's walking stick, and it had flowers on it white and sweet as the bread pinched out of his grandma's choleh.

He jumped up in his impatience, sat down on the bench, crossed his legs, and labored to make wrinkles in his forehead. What was keeping his brother?

[5. The Little Jew J Charley would know, he didn't make fun like the rest. His daddy, however, didn't like Charley any more because he had found him feeding the shoelace peddler in the kitchen of the restaurant. That was the time the old cripple had taken off his leg, pink as a doll's, to give Ben Ezra a chance to examine his stump and all the complicated straps and buckles.

Ben Ezra blinked up at the sky where a cloud blew like a little lost shirt over the housetops. He blinked at the fence bristling with nails. A little gray sparrow hopped down the garden path toward him, slanted its head, fixed him with its pinlike eye, and said chip.

"What's cheap?" demanded Ben Ezra. "Chip," the sparrow repeated. "Shut your mouth, golem!" Ben Ezra stepped up to it like a wrestler. The sparrow flew to the tree, perched on a branch, rocked and danced as if it were laughing at him.

Ben Ezra lowered his head, made a dash at the tree, leaped to catch the lowest bough, dropped from it as if he had been scalded, and backed away gasping. "I was just fooling, just fooling!" He shook his fist at the sparrow and started looking for a stone.

There was a commotion in the house. He raced through the basement. False alarm. His mother lay in the same position, her eyes closed, and the nurse sat beside her and wiped the sweat off her face. He puffed at the shicksa goyische as if he could blow her right through the window. Wheeling around, he marched into the street.

He was pacing busily between the trees when a car drove up. The doctor got out with his bag.

"Hello, breezy B.z.; cried the doctor. "I'm bringing your brother here in my bag!" "You're a liar!" "Is that the way to talk to an old friend, B.Z.?" "Let me see!" "We must bring it up to the room first!" "You're a liar. It's got no holes for breathing. You got to have holes for breathing like what they keep dogs and pussies in when they ride on the train. I seen. Charley says!" He butted his head.

"Where's the little brother then?" "In my mommy!" The doctor grinned and beat it into the house. "Ben Ezra!" There was his father crossing the

street, lines of worry gashed deep in his forehead. "Ben Ezra, your brother will be here soon. Wait for me. I'll get a shirt for you. We'll go to the restaurant." "Then I'll see Charley?" "No fooling?" "I've said yes." [6. The California Quarterly J Ben Ezra hop-skipped, whirled around madly, and galloped after him. The nurse blocked the entrance to the bedroom in which there was a horrible threshing about, a vomiting and groaning.

Ben Ezra's father turned white, but the boy pressed forward, "Oh, nosir, I want to see." Carrying basins and pans, Mary pounded up from the basement, her skirts blown about. There was a wild tearing cry and a groan. The nurse thrust a shirt out and whipped the door shut after Mary.

Ben Ezra spread his legs and lowered his head. "The doctor, daddy, I know that fella. I want no hurting. Understand?"

"I heard you, Ben Ezra." His father shuddered as there was a strangled shriek, and yanking the boy by the hand, he fled into the street. Only at the corner did he stop to put the shirt on. "I give you my word we will do nothing to hurt your mommy." "And my brother." "Of course, your brother. Come, your friend Charley wants to see you. He has something to show you." Hands clasped behind his back, Ben Ezra walked gravely at his side. They passed the shul where his daddy's name was on the wall, and he waved and sang to the old men sitting at the gate that his brother was coming, that he was going to see Charley. Then there was the market, and he went inside to shout the glad tidings to his friends the guard who wore a uniform like a letter-carrier's; the baker who gave him two round cakes with cherries which he saved for the little Jew; and the Italians who sold long thin slippery fish that looked like snails.

In the restaurant where the waiters and the busboys wore white skullcaps with blue stars on them, they lined up to say mazel tov and pump his paw. He brushed past them in his eagerness to get to Charley. In the kitchen, however, peeling onions, tears sliding down his hollow cheeks to his sunken chest, there was another man. So his father had been fooling. Charley, because of the peddler and other things, was no longer working for him; he wouldn't see him any more in the world.

Down in the cellar there was a clomping and thumping. In through the door at the rear of the kitchen a sack of potatoes appeared. "Charley, Charley," sobbed Ben Ezra, plunging forward to help. The sack stopped, a neighing burst out from under it, and it headed for the bin.

A lean spry man with tattoos like black and blue marks on his chest jumped from under the sack, caught it smack on his knees, and jerked open an ear. The potatoes rolled into the bin, rushing to see which would get there first, his tattooed arms, one with a bottle with a ship in it, the other with a bottle with a man in it, working so fast that the ropes and knots in them played wildly.

"This is Ben, Jim;" Charley threw his head back. His hair curled in gray locks on his battered brow. His green eyes danced merrily.

[7. The Little Jew J The lanky, onion-stained man nodded. "How ye, Ben?"

"A chip off the old block, Jim, with a block of his own. He's got more guts than a slaughter house.'" Jim eyed the boy through his tears and bared his black gums. Charley shook out the sack, bunched it into a ball, wound up with a kick of his leg, and threw it across the room. "What's cooking, Ben?" He grinned at the boy, "Ain't the brother in yet? Mrs. Blacky came across quicker than your ma. No hospital, no doctor, no nothing. She's a real girl. She's been waiting for you to say mazels tov.'" Past the stoves and the rows of gleaming glasslike pots, past the freezers and the hampers, in a small room off the kitchen, bedded down on an old pilot jacket, lay Ben Ezra's other good friend, Blacky. Poked into her belly were five tiny, licked-down, coal-black kittens. She raised her head, opened the bluish split buttons of her eyes, waved her tail, and lay back lazily as the boy squatted beside her. Charley picked up a kitten and handed it to Ben Ezra who held it, trembling as if he were afraid it would spill.

"I ain't hurting, Charley;" he gasped. "I ain't.'" He brought the kitten close to his face. "Can it see, Charley?"

"In a couple of days.'" "Where's the daddy?" "Away on business.'" "What business?" "Cat's business, tomfooling, hanging around all the fences and bars in New York. He ain't like your dad, got his snoot to the stone all the time.'" Charley reached out to pinch one of the pimples sticking out of the cat's fur. A drop of milk came out. "Sweet as honey;" said the kitchen man licking at the milk. He got on his fours and miowed and made a threat to bite the throat of the boy who swerved to one side. "Ain't it the cat's whiskers?" He jumped to his feet, cracked his knuckles which popped like pistols, and ground his great yellow teeth.

"Hey, you got your shorts on the wrong way. A man's tail is in front. That's why when he's backing up, he's going ahead, backing and filling!' He took Ben Ezra's shorts off and helped him get them on right. "Let's feel that muskle of yours. Hard as rock. Now, one!'" Ben Ezra advanced, laid his hands on the tattooed arm and grunted, and with a shout the kitchen man gave a somersault and landed on his feet.

"Boy, boy, you getting hotter every day!'" "You going to show me somersaults and jumping, Charley?" "Bet your boots I am. Now, two!'" He hunched down, and as he put up his mitts, Ben Ezra went at him with both fists, first in the midsection, against the scrap-iron of his ribs, and then a hard crack in the mug. Charley gave a snuffle, reeled, and collapsed on the floor.

"One, two, three;" counted the boy. At "ten" he pulled frantically at the [8. The California Quarterly J ol~ sailor man who opened one eye like a green shooter and let out a groan.

"Hurt? Sure, you hurt. You'll knock the living daylights out of anybody that fusses with your brother, calls him names or tries rough stuff. Now I got to git back to work or else;" he ended warningly. He snatched up a couple of knives, slapped one into his mouth as if he were a pirate, and with the other chopped celery on a block. "Charley;" said Ben Ezra pressing against the block, "you was in the circus, wasn't you, with magic and tricks?"

The kitchen man nodded.

"Was it after you worked on a ship, Charley?" "Right, B.Z. After I went to sea and got water on the knee and so hit the drink!'" Ben Ezra waited patiently until he had stopped hawhawing. "No fooling, you going to work for my daddy always, always, Charley?"

Charley exchanged glances with the other man and shrugged his shoulders. When the boy hugged him hard around the knees, he grunted, "Sure, sure I will. No fooling. Now better scoot or I'll be on the chute quicker than you can wink your eye. I got to finish these greens. And don't forget to pass out cigars to Jim and me when the brother is born!'" Hurrying out of the kitchen, Ben Ezra ran into the man who owned the furniture store on the other side of the market. "Mazel tov, B.Z.!" They shook hands. "How about taking my order?"

"After, after;" he bawled in excitement, for there at the door, bowing and scraping, in one fist the shoelaces and in the other the old cracker of a straw hat, was the crippled peddler. His trousers, hitched up to his knee, showed his pink doll's leg.

Ben Ezra's father came out of the office. "That old goy;" he muttered, "that nuisance again. Here, let him go.'" B.Z. took the penny and ran forward with it. The old man glared at the penny, spat, and shoving the boy's hand away, hobbled down the street cursing.

The father frowned down at the frightened boy. "You with your beggars and your Charleys! Friend of the world!" His voice softened. "Now pick the penny up and drop it into the pushke for the poor. Our own, and stay with me. Soon we'll hear that your brother has arrived.'" Ben Ezra dropped the penny into the box "For women and children, widows and orphans in Israel" which hung in the office. Then he sat down quietly near his father who kept watching the telephone. After a while the boy sidled out and raced for the kitchen to tell Charley about the beggar, but the kitchen man had left for the day.

As it was getting late, he was called to eat with the two partners. After supper, a toothpick in the corner of his mouth, he paraded up and down the aisles, helped the busboys and the waiters, bawled orders, and sat down with various customers who treated him to ice cream. Stuffed, hoarse, his legs [9. The Little Jew J buckling under him, he went into the back room and cuddled up in the pilot jacket with Blacky and her family...

From far off there came a faint cry as if one of the kittens was being squeezed. "Charley, I ain't hurting;" he muttered. The pussy cry was repeated. He sat up, rubbing his eyes. A bag fell out of his fists. He peeked into it and saw a couple of cherry cakes. He looked about him crossly. At the window the shadow of the long warning finger of the tree. He got up and padded across the room to the ledge on which his mother had kept flowerpots before she had gotten sick. He yawned and squinted at the tree. A sparrow golem head was on the branch hopping around. He searched the room for something to throw at it, and then caught the tip of the branch and shook hard. The sparrow kept on bouncing as if it were made of rubber. If he stood on the ledge he could climb out on the tree and give that sparrow a punch in the nose. Downstairs the pussy cry

once more. Fists cocked, he swung around and charged toward his mother's room.

At the door he brought his finger to his lips, strained up on his toes, and stopped. There near the bed sat his father, and reaching toward him, his mother stroked his cheek. The angry, worried business look, the knifing lines, seemed to go away under her touch. When the man saw the boy, he gave a start and jumped to his feet.

The pussy cry was repeated.

"In your old room, darling.'" Ben Ezra's mother beamed at him. "Daddy, show him.'" The nurse was bending over the high white fence of the crib, and in it lay a squealing package, tight as a bandage, and squeezed out of one end was a face wrinkled like a tiny cherry.

"That's your brother, Ben;" said his father. He had a hurt look. "All of him.'" "Brother, little brother, little partner!" Ben Ezra's voice broke, he brought both hands up to his chest, cupping them. "Oh, my little fishy my crumb, my little crown, what took you so long, tatele? I thought you was never coming, little bof He flung a leg up to climb over the fence, slipped and fell on his behind. He backed away and ran up again, gripped the fence, and almost catapulted himself into the crib.

His father caught him and held him under the armpits. "I see. So you think we have a real customer here.'" Ben Ezra stretched out his hands, kicked loose, and dashed into the next room to his mother. "Dear boy;" she whispered, "I'm glad I made you happy" He snatched at her hand to kiss it, leaped back to the crib, dropped on his belly on the floor, swam like a fish, crowed like a rooster, barked and miowed, getting his dog and cat mixed. He tried a cartwheel, fell with a bang, got up and shot punches, and then galloped upstairs, heaving and snorting, dragged down the bag with the cakes, his ball and marbles and buttons and crayons, his shooting irons, the captain on a horse waving a toothpick of a sword, and Popeye the glorious old sailorman who had lost his pipe and pants during one [ro. The California Quarterly J of his exploits. He spread them around the crib. "See, little partner. See. For you. Everything in the whole world.'" During the performance Tata Gran-dpa and Tata Grandma arrived, the old man with the gleaming beard and the silver-handled cane three strides ahead of the little old woman who had never been able to catch up with him, and was always breathless and flustered. Together they bent over the crib. Together they went into the

next room, now the old lady first, and she took the young woman's face in her hands and kissed her, and held her close for a long time, and the old man bent and bowed.

"Now that the long awaited has arrived, get dressed, Ben Ezra, eat and rejoice;" said Tata finding his voice at last.

"But he must grow up to be a big fella, Grandpa.'" "From your mouth to God's ears;" said the old woman. "God is a father. He will watch over him. Come.'" Reluctantly he went upstairs where Grandpa took off his street hat, and underneath it like a Chinese box was another hat, a blue velvet skullcap which smelled of snuff, and Grandma took off her shawl and patted into place her little wig which looked like a bird's nest. And then together they showed what they had brought for him this time bookkas which she had baked, a bag of candied orange peel and small bricks of halvah, and tiny figures of men and women and children made of fragrant wood from Israel, each hugging a letter from the Hebrew alphabet.

He was setting rip the figures, repeating the letters after his grandfather, eating a boolka at the same time, when there was a noise in the nursery. He dropped the toys.

"Where ate you galloping off like Samson's little foxes with the hot behinds?" asked the old man.

"I told you, Grandpa. I got to take care. Hear. My little boss, my little partner, Grandpa, my only one, he is crying, and she don't do nothing, that golem nurse.'" The old man held him between his knees. "It isn't the nurse's fault, tatele. She is a good nurse and does her work well. Everyone starts crying when he takes his first look at the world!" Ben Ezra stopped struggling. "You ain't making fun again?" "As I am a Jew, I am not making fun this time.'" Ben Ezra put his hands on his grandfather's face, and peered into his eyes searchingly. "Tata, you're a liar.'" The old man started, took his ruffled beard in both hands, and pulled to help keep a straight face. "Why am I a liar?" he asked.

"Because it's like the pussy's, Blacky's little kids in the restaurant. They don't see yet. The baby don't see yet. Charley told me.'" "He feels the world. Feeling is a seeing!" "Not with the hands, Grandpa. Oh, nosir. His hands go like this!" Ben Ezra dropped on the floor on his back and jerked his fists and legs.

[11. The Little Jew]

"The world feels him then, touches him. You with your iron sense. And who is this Charley who teaches you chochmeh?"

"Grandpa;" Ben Ezra cried in disgust, "he works in the restaurant. He gave me Popeye the sailor.'" The old man closed his eyes, tasted with his lips. "He used to be the shabbas goy. Yes, the one who makes fires and turns on the light for us when it is a sin for Jews.'" "Why is it a sin for us and not for him?" "That is how it is written in God's book.'" "In red and black like the book that makes business in the office in the restaurant? I seen when daddy was talking to the new partner showing him the ropes.'" "What ropes?" "Like Charley says.'" For the rest of the day Ben Ezra stood guard over his brother. He supervised his mother's feeding the baby from the breasts, saw the baby spitting out, his mother in tears, the doctor coming and going, and he could not understand, for there was Blacky with five kids and she had no trouble. Would the brother always be sick, never get up like his mother, and so never grow up to have fun and play with? He refused to dress, to eat, to go out.

Toward evening his grandparents enticed him into his room, sponged him, and his grandmother sat beside him, smelling of hot boolkas, stroking his brow with a dry little hand light as a leaf from the honey tree, her face through its heap of wrinkles shining down upon him.

"I want my mommy;" he muttered, tossing in his fever. "Soon, soon. You tzopil like a fish. Lie still. Like two drops of water, you and your father. How you take everything to heart. Shush, shush. The little white goat.'" And she crooned him to sleep:

U oder Ben Ezra's cradle
Stands a snow-white little goat.
Little goat's gone off to peddle Raisins and almonds
Like the best of goods. Ben Ezra
will learn Torah...

The sun, poking through the blinds, touched him with its pointer. He lay still and stared into the next room which was occupied by his grandparents. From it came a rustling and murmuring. Buried in his talith with the tiny cattails, clothed with the black straps and square black boxes, the figure of his grandfather like a pillar at morning prayers. Ben Ezra clapped his hands, wrapped himself in his blanket, and started rocking and swaying and jabbering to himself.

The old man peeped out of his talith, his shoulders shook. Forgotten were his prayers. "Ah, you koondis, you imp, I see you are feeling better!" Then [r 2. The California Quarterly J he frowned. So did Ben Ezra who heard the squalling and stormed downstairs.

It was the world outside hurting his brother, and so Ben Ezra buckled on his holster with the two shooting irons and hunted up the policeman to warn him there was too much noise. He fought the boys who were playing marbles in front of the house between the two trees, and when the merrygo-round pulled by the Indian pony with the white star rattled down the street, he hurried over to the driver.

"Shake, Tony," he cried. "I got my brother. But he ain't used yet. Come when he grows up big like anything and ain't sick no more. Understand?"

With a pat on the skull he dismissed the pony which only he among the kids had dared to ride bareback, clutching its mane and galloping while the whole block had looked on. Hands on his guns, legs astraddle, lips trembling, he watched the painted wagon spin away.

In spite of his efforts, the baby kept on being sick, and he marched upstairs to consult with his grandfather whom he found bent over a prayer book, brown as the paper on which little chicken livers are roasted.

"Restless again, my little pot?" said the old man eyeing him through his silver-rimmed spectacles.

"Brother don't feel good, and you make fun with pots!" "Forgive me. What shall we do to help our brother? What shall we do for our little Jew?"

Ben Ezra leafed through the book. Soon, helped by the sweet wood, he would study and know all these letters. "Maybe God can, Grandpa?"

The old man's face lighted up. "Spoken like a Jew. How shall we appeal to the Almighty? Shall we pray?"

"With the boxes, Grandpa!" "You're not old enough for that!" "They're little boxes!" "True, but you've got to be thirteen, to be Bar Mitzvah before you can use them!" Ben Ezra put his hands behind his back, dropped his head on his chest, chewed the matter over, hunched his shoulders and circled the room. He halted, spread his legs, and bugled up at the ceiling. "God, little brother what was coming and coming, come. But he don't feel extra. Make him feel used he don't have to cry no more!"

He butted and blared, "In the world!." "Spoken like a man;" said Tata Grandpa. "I can write good, too, Grandpa!." He got his pen and scrawled a couple of words. Dissatisfied, he crossed them out and made a picture of the brother in the crib-it was like a chick or a little bird fallen on the other side of the fence. "Now you write, Grandpa!." Solemnly the old man got fresh paper and an envelope and wrote. "It's in Jewish;" cried Ben Ezra. "What's wrong with Jewish?" "Then God ain't for Charley!." [13. The Little Jew J The old man muffled his laughter. "You'll have to ask Charley!." All these appeals got nowhere. "We must be patient;" explained his grandfather. "God's in the Seventh Heaven these days because of this glorious birth after so many years, because of Israel, and other matters. It takes time to reach Him!." Ben Ezra turned for help to Charley. To avoid being caught by his father he stole into the restaurant the back way. The sailorman, busy as always, picked up three knives from the block as the boy tiptoed into the kitchen, and began juggling them, crying Blade, catching them by the blades, crying Handle, catching them by the handles, and then he went into a kniveswallowing act, rolling his eyes horribly, groaning so that the boy shrieked, "Charley, you're hurting!"

Convulsively Charley drew out the knife. "No blood;" he gasped. "Got it down far as me knees to let the water out!" He scraped the sweat off his battered brow. "You here alone? So that is why you come the yard way. You ain't supposed to come alone crossing all them streets. Your old man'll cut my gizzards out!." He dropped his knives and hurried to the office. "He's sore as boils and blazes. Orders is to bring you back!." Ben Ezra studied the knife that had been swallowed, found nary a speck of blood on it, and puzzled, sat down to play with Blacky and her kittens. He looked up to see Charley undressing and remarked, "You got crooked legs, Charley!." "You don't miss nothing, do you? You and your old man was eyed first when you was made, like trout. My bandy legs is from carrying many a load. Yah, I am what I am. Yaweh!" He whistled and knocked his heels together.

They walked out together, Ben Ezra pacing gravely at his side as he gave an account of the trouble with the baby, the doctor's views, his father's, how long his mother had been bedridden, and how his grandfather had prayed and written a letter. "Grandpa Tata, he was fooling!." Charley looked down at the frowning face. "You sure, Ben?" Ben Ezra gave a vigorous butt with his head. "He makes jokes!." "I don't run

away from them!" "You got magic and tricks." "Tricks, yeh;" muttered Charley sourly. When he saw the trusting look the little boy gave him, the twinkle returned to his eyes and his battered face broke into a grin. "So you think I can help? Now, say I take a day off;" and here he gave a cough, "and ship out again and go back to China to find out what happened to all them pigtails, what'll you do?"

Ben Ezra crowed, "I'll go find you then, Charley." "Damned if you wouldn't. Let's pull in here. I got to oil up the old engine before I can help, Ben boY." The tavern was a long cool place with a glistening bar and high stools speckled with rings of brass nails. Above the mirror, over the rows of bottles there was the life-size head of a horse, and on one side of it the figures of a [14. The California Quarterly J couple of wrestlers heaving at each other, and on the opposite side two prizefighters hacking at each other. The walls were covered with photos, paintings, prints of horses.

Hands behind his back, legs spread, Ben Ezra studied the horses. "It ain't like my daddy's restaurant;" he observed.

"You ain't kidding;" said Charley. "You like horses, don't you, Ben?" The boy nodded and climbed up on a stool.

"Then we'll give you a poni" The bartender got a small glass and measured off a few drops into it. Charley stood at the end of the bar with a bottle. As the bottle turned white, his face turned red. "Mazels tov, mazels tov for Ben's brother. He's going to grow up to be some man. There's always room for another good "And a Jew;" chimed in Bert Ezra. "There's always room for another Jew;" said Charley cheerfully. The three drank solemnly, and then the bartender measured off a couple of more drops for the pony, saying, "On the house;" and once more the three men drank.

Ben Ezra had trouble getting off the stool. Charley squatted, ordered him to climb aboard, and with the boy on his back, trotted into the street neighing.

"I'm sweet on you, Mary;" he cried, galloping into the basement fast as the Indian pony, chasing after the woman who ran shrieking and giggling before him. "Don't be scared. We ain't takin' a nip out of you just yet. Had our nip. Come to help the brother. First, let's get this load oW" He deposited the boy on the sofa, and flew upstairs to inspect the little brother.

Ben Ezra heard them laughing upstairs-his mother, the nurse, Mary, the old sailorman. He laughed also and sang, "Oh, my Charley, my Charley.'" He tried to get up, fell back, counted, and finally wrestled his way to his feet. He climbed the stairs dizzily, but Charley had already beat it.

The brother, however, was feeling better. In the dimness of the small sweet room he did not stir; if you strained and listened you could barely make out his faint breathing. Yes, Charley with his magic and his tricks and his mazel tov, it was Charley who had helped.

The tiny fellow slept peacefully hours at a time in spite of the noise of the world and the doings in the house. For they were getting ready for the circumcision. Tables and benches and folding chairs were hauled from the restaurant in a truck. Everywhere there was the smell of the special cooking and baking overseen by his grandmother. Her wig like a shaky bird's nest, her lace shawl dragging like a net, she hurried here and there tasting and pecking. "It reminds me of the old home when we had our first born;" she told Tata breathlessly. "Dogs went around carrying whole heads.'" Tata Grandpa, who had combed his beard and made a fresh silver opening for his mouth, sat on a bath stool and murmured his approval as Ben Ezra took a bath. Then he helped him into his new suit, knotting his bowtie, and [15. The Little Jew J tightened the laces that were always loosening on the shoes which chirped to one another like birds. He peeked into his ears and trained his eyes on his fingers. "Look what long nails you have, tatele.'" His clippers were in his back pocket where he kept his silk handkerchief, his snuffbox, and ~is treats. "Your nails are like a mohel's.'" "Now what's that, Grandpa? Is that like rakatz and tzopil Grandma said when I was sick?"

"A mohel is a man who makes Jews. He is a holy man. Ours is a rabbi. Your father, trust your father, he must have some one special, different. When you grow up, you will understand many, many things, including the ways of your father, the ways of your father's father, the ways of your father's father's--"

"That's you, Grandpa;" Ben Ezra cried in delight. "A priest, a rabbi in Israel. When he comes in, you will greet him: "Goot woch, goot yohr. Woos macht a Yid?"

"Makt a Yid.'" Ben Ezra sipped the words and found them to his liking. "How does he make it, Grandpa Tata?"

"A pat here, a pinch there, and this makes the Jew~' The old man kissed him heartily and folded him in his arms, covering him with his beard seasoned with snuff, pepper, and citron.

• The house began to fill with the invited Mama Grandma and Mama Grandpa, the old men from the shul, the new partner and his family, tames and uncles, cousins, boys and girls, so many that Ben Ezra could hardly keep track of all of them. He ran around shaking hands, bawling out their names, piling presents for his brother in a closet, arming a kid cousin with his shooting irons to guard them. "Columbus is a Jew, 1492;" he sang.

His father was wearing a skullcap with a button which made it look like a teapot lid. Ben Ezra wore a similar cap, and trailed after him, repeating his orders, furrowing his forehead, making a face as if he were in the great kitchen of the restaurant tasting from the pots, checking and scolding the cooks and the bakers. He caught up with him. "Charley;" he cried frantically, "Daddy, you said Charley--"

"I forgot, Ben Ezra.'" Knowing that his father never forgot anything, Ben Ezra chased after him and ran into a man who wore a high hat and glasses with a looped ribbon and a great beard around his neck shot with fire. He carried a black bag like a doctor's.

Grandpa Tata came forward, adjusted the zipper in Ben Ezra's trousers. Ben flung his head back and bugled, "Woos makt a Yid?"

"I am fine;" boomed the holy man, beaming down at him over his stomach. "And how are you, my fading, my small bullock?" He extended a huge burning hand to Ben Ezra. "Surely, we shall make him a Jew, and what a Jew!"

Ben Ezra raced over to the crib where his brother was lying quietly, study- [16. The California Quarterly J ing the ceiling. "Cuckoo, cuckoo, soon it'll be, partner, little brother, mate.'" He elbowed his way through the women to his mother who sat upright in bed. With a reassuring pat on her hand, he wheeled around and charged into the room where the ceremony was to take place.

People were standing around laughing and talking but there was no Charley. The nurse and Mary who were shicksa goys were at the ceremony, but Charley, a shabbas goy who mad~ lights and turned them out and so helped them not to get sins, and was magic, he was excluded.

As he resumed chasing after his father, there was a stir at the door. Ben Ezra clapped his hands in his excitement.

A fresh tent on her hair and a mask over her mouth, the nurse sailed into the room carrying the little fellow on a pillow. He was dressed in blue and white ribbons and a dress, and he was making fists while she cooed and smiled at him.

The rabbi had put on a mask, a gown, a towering skullcap, and his sleeves were rolled up to do magic. He glanced up from the table on which he had placed boxes and towels. "Blessed is the newcomer;" he chanted. He took the baby from the nurse with one hand, walked over to a chair which stood to one side, lowered the baby, raised him, and continued chanting.

Watching every move closely, Ben Ezra turned to his grandfather, took his ear to whisper into it when the masked rabbi paused in his chanting and called, "The Godfather.'"Come, Godfather;" said Ben Ezra's father. "The honor is for my partner to hold the new son.'" The partner had a scar on his face and a soldier's button in his coat. The scar turned red. "Thanks for the honor;" he said.

"We thank you. Your honor is ours.'" Ben Ezra tore over to his father. "Charley, he can hold, Daddy. He's strong, and he can do tricks.'" His father raised a long warning finger, and the partner sat down, had a mask put over his mouth, and received the baby from the rabbi.

"Don't pinch he should cry, partner, golem head.'" Ben Ezra followed the restless fists and legs. "Ach, you, my little brother.'" He nodded happily. "Soon, soon.'" In through the windows came the chirping of sparrows, the street rumbled, and the singing rabbi took something from the boxes and bent over the pillow, and Ben's father began reciting in a loud voice. The baby let out a p1ercmg cry.

The rabbi dipped a napkin into the wine which he put to the baby's lips. He stepped back and continued singing over the wine. The nurse came forward, picked up the baby, and as she passed through the room, it beat the air with its fists convulsively.

"Mazel tov, mazel tov.'" The men shook hands, the women flocked to the other room to embrace the mother. Tata Grandma was standing to one side [17.The Little Jew J weeping quietly. Ben Ezra's father went

over to her and lowered his head, and she kissed him on the brow, on the main gash.

"I seen!" roared Ben Ezra. "He didn't pinch. Oh, nosir. Like a knife he done to my little one!'" He fought to get out of his grandfather's arms.

"Ben Ezra, dear one, the rabbi is our friend!'" The enraged boy hit out. "Oh, nosir!"

"The rabbi made him a Jew!'" "Let me!" "Listen, tatele!'" "He's my brother first. I'll give him a kick in the pants in the nose!'" His mother called and made an effort to rise from bed, tames a~ uncles gathered around him while the cousin who had been guarding the presents handed back the irons. "B.Z., nobody took. Give a look!'" They tried to hush him, for the rabbi was preparing to speak.

He had put away boxes, mask, and gown; he had slipped on his long coat. His glasses were pinched on his nose, his beard spread in a small fire. He stood in the center of the room gazing about him with a benevolent smile, and then he raised the wine to wish his host the best of luck, congratulating him on strengthening the house, his people, the ways of the fathers.

"Thank you, rabbi. In spite of the furnace we are still here, we are still flourishing. Abraham went through unharmed, unchanged, according to the Midrash!'" "No one goes untouched!'" "A stronger better Jew then, and no less a man. For those who will not understand, and oppose us, we will empty ourselves on their graves!'" At that moment Ben Ezra darted into the room pursued by his grandfather, tames and uncles, and the cousin with the shooting irons. He plunged with his head against the rabbi's belly, banging against the white waistcoat with its loop of gold chain. The rabbi gasped and staggered back. Ben Ezra gathered himself, butted again, and went at him with both fists. The goblet was knocked out of the rabbi's hands, staining man and child.

With one step Ben Ezra's father caught the boy by the shoulders, jerked hirri. off the floor, and shook hard.

"My little brother, oh, my little one!" "Stop, I say!'" "Brother, brother!'" "Hush;" said the rabbi. "Hush;" he repeated softly. "We know, we understand, we are listening, you stiff-necked little Jew!'" He picked up a napkin and dried himself coolly as if to get splattered were also part of

his day's work. "It is only a child," he declared to the assembly. "How can we blame him when he sees his brother being hurt?"

"It'll heal in time for his wedding, rabbi. In both cases. And now, you, will you stop? See what you have done. Is that the way to help your brother?"

[r8. The California Quarterly J Here'.] Ben Ezra's father took out his handkerchief and wiped the boy's face. "Now no more." "But my brother, Daddy, what he done to him. And Charley, you said Charley--"

"That shucker, that goy is no longer working for us." "My Charley, oh, my Charley!" Without another word his father yanked him up as if he were a sack, hustled him upstairs to his room, and banged the door shut.

Crumpled, wet from the wine, Ben Ezra ran across the room. He flung himself at the door, pounded, and wrenched at the knob. He turned and saw scattered on the floor the bag with the cherry cakes, his ball and crayons and shooters, the fragrant wood with its Hebrew figures, the captain on a horse waving his toothpick of a sword, and the mighty sailorman, I Am What I Am, all that he had been saving for his brother, and he cried out in his grief.

The waiters scurried out of the basement kitchen and filed up the stairs with steaming platters. The guests flocked to the tables. Sounds of the festivity, of the eating and drinking and rejoicing, filled the house and overflowed into the street and the garden, but the pain of his little brother rose higher and higher.

The tree at the window beckoned Ben Ezra. He stopped his sobbing, got a chair, placed it firmly against the window, and stepped off the chair on to the ledge. He strutted on the ledge for a moment, and then, peering into the room, he reassured the sailorman and the others: "Wait. Soon, soon." Now just one step and he would be in the tree. He puffed himself up and reached out like a wrestler for that dark finger on which hung bright leaves, pods, and the flowers, white and sweet as if they had been pinched out of Tata Grandma's chalah bread.

The branch bent and swung under his weight; he was suspended in air, almost level with the first floor. As he sang out in delight and triumph, and twisted to face the ledge from which he had launched himself, the tree rushed forward with a loud crack and a wallop. He fell with a thud.

When he came to, he grunted and kicked forward, only to fall back. He started counting. By "ten" he was sitting up. His shoe had fallen off. He put it on, knotted the lace laboriously with a frown. "There'." Ben Ezra got up with a whimper. He was hurt. He shook his fist at the tree, and with a limp and a swagger he left the garden and went into the street to look for Charley.

[19. The Little Jew J

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Eight Poems

Phelps Putnam

To an Ivy Vine

Old irony grows ivy-like and strong,
And hardily it clambers from my heart;
It has dark leaves and sturdy roots that start
There where my blood sings bitterly and long.

Unfailing, pungent vine, my brain would rot
If from my heart time ripped your roots away
And yet I am not wholly yours, today
My heart has room where irony is not.

And there is dreaming, innocent of death,
A girl whose hopes are undismayed and clear,
Who says that I am love and love is true -

O bosom vine, this is my prayer to you;
Before your roots go groping for her breath,
Delay, delay, for she is young and dear.

Note 37

You can catch birds in a net
Which will strangle them and yet
They will stick their voices through,
Singing bloody murder. You,
Listening, will say, how grand
That the birds have made a stand.

Authors Write Books

We are detective stories now.
We are the authors and we know
The corpse, the villains, and the plot;
We know the cause and the results;
We can trace them backwards in the books,

[20]

Which sell at second-handed rates.
The stories work; and the slaughter
Is intense and the villain juggled,
Or by self-murder killed.
We know the answers, so why wait?
We have two hands which should
Be severed from our wrists.

To Some Young Poet

I'm leaking blood out of my face.
This unpleasant commonplace
Companion of my heart does not
Encourage me between the sweat and snot
To think that I shall finish ever
The work without whose force I never
Would have reached this age.
Feller, it was a noble notion
Fostered by Dante, the one sage
Of poetry, and mothered
By a few scientists' unsmothered
And long held devotion
To the detailed description
Of conception and child-birth.
You could pick it up and write it
I shall not be here to smite it
It protrudes into the time
When other poems are worth a dime
A dozen, it is worth
Thinking of, as a birth.
As for your politics I care
Only that you write large and fair
Only that you now have chosen
For life as against the frozen
Ideas of property, an easy choice
Unless you are a slave's voice.
"Which side are you on?"

The ballad tinkles on.
The banjo still can penetrate
To young poets who hesitate.
You take it from there
I have not a single hair
That is not as grey as my spit is red.

[21]

And remember that I'm dead.
And the idea is as good
Or better than the old food
Of thoughts you nibble on.

My Sisters

I have tortured the younger one
Thinking she had a dislocated wrist
When it was broke I reset the bones
While the young love screamed.
Is there forgiveness for such pain?
Later I was warm and suave to them
As they wandered in a college where I had
Friends and adventures into love.
What could they think of me?
Would they, like old Cordelia, see
What measly kindness I had?
And what reserve of love?
Which later bloomed like the small
Hard autumn flowers, constant,
High-colored in the fall.
I would like to die
Recorded in this longtime constancy.

Introducing the Author

These poems were written by a man
On whom there was no curse;
Neither class nor time constricted him.
He had asthmatic, strangling breath
He had disease, the poisoner;

He had stenosis of the excited heart.
And he had fondness for all drink
Which could pull him sometimes up
From the thick noise of disease
Into static clarity.
When he was awkward, as he was,
There stood the friendly alcohol
Converting awkwardness to love,
To friendliness, to politics and warmth.

[22]

The Turquoise Ring

In the first place it is beautiful
Blue, silver on my ugly hand.
In the second place my friend
Died and his widow passed it on.
In the third place it belonged
To a Navajo, it is molded to
A hand holding a rein.
In the fourth place
If the ring is strong and is not yours
You will have sores instead of joy-
You will regret you ever went
Into the turquoise world.
My ring has never bitten me.

This was a horseman's ring
It lies easily at the base
Of the fourth finger of the hand
In which his rein was hung
A left-handed man.
He did not in his later time
Carry the turquoise down
To the Incas for a trade.
He did not run a store.
He was between those worlds and now
The blue sky floats
Incongruously on my hand.

The maker of this ring died easily
And his following heirs died as he died
In the ritual of the turquoise.
There were many years like this until
My friend, alone and sick,
Outside the silver and the turquoise world
Conceived himself a misery
And shot himself. And now
I keep in its serenity this ring
Which binds me to the miners who
Went for the tribe into the mountains where
They worked the turquoise out of earth.

The Geese Have Passed

Be virtuous, and you will see
The geese go over as reward.
Work at your trade all night
To have the old place orderly,
And protected in the cold.
And suddenly you shall hear the geese,
Like a kennel of small dogs at first,
On the next place, an old sound,
Then louder, louder, and more noise
Then awkward clamor in the skies.
And rush out then,
And see the dark ranks ragged
Forming and reforming, yelling
For a night's landing-place.
And the lines are beautiful-
Like truth, they make you weep
If you are virtuous.

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Mightier Than the Pen

Lars Lawrence

Lars Lawrence's *Morning Noon and Night*, the first volume of a long novel entitled *The Seed*, was published by Putnam last fall. Next September a second volume will appear, tentatively called *Out of the Dust*, from which this chapter is taken. Readers of *Morning Noon and Night* will recall that in that volume more than fifty men were arrested and charged with the murder of a sheriff in an eviction riot in the southwestern mining town of Reata. These suspects have now been shipped by train to the capital city of Hidalgo for safe-keeping in the State Penitentiary pending trial.

WEN the local with its coach-ful of prisoners pulled into Hidalgo, hardly a brassie-shot from the capitol dome, it was discovered that Woodrow Wilson Lucero was running a fever and could no longer stand on his bandaged feet. Nor could his handcuffed comrades carry him. Two deputies were assigned to make a boatswain's chair of their hands and wrists and convey him to the back seat of the automobile of Deputy Warden Guerrero of the State Pen. The rest of the prisoners were counted off and jammed into the body of a truck, the cab and running-boards of which were crowded with armed men. A second car containing Deputy Batt Bolling and the local sheriff would follow the truck to prevent any death-defying leaps for freedom.

The Pen was as adroitly segregated from the gracious, aging city as an outhouse from the manor. Between them lay three miles of cactus and pinyon scrub, littered with rubbish and rusted tin cans that ironically gleamed like old gold in the afternoon sunlight....

With sirens wide open the three vehicles covered the distance to the Pen in a few minutes. The truck travelled in a boil of dust rolled up by the car ahead. The prisoners spoke little, keeping their eyes and mouths shut till the caravan slowed to negotiate the main gate where a routine inspection was required.

The prison consisted of the usual huddle of gloomy architecture with barred windows, surrounded by the usual high wall with watch towers

and searchlights, flanked by irrigated fields in which a few trusties in dungarees leaned on their tools to observe the new arrivals.

[25 J

Moby Douglass broke the silence with his hearty basso: "Boy, ain't it good to be home!" He perfectly expressed the bitterness of the Reata men and surprised them into laughter.

Past the gate the caravan halted outside the Warden's office. While Batt went inside with his briefcase stuffed with official papers, Deputy Warden Tex Guerrero and Deputy Sheriff Lou Donneger ordered the prisoners down and lined them up in three long ranks. Was there any man among them, Guerrero asked, who did not understand either English or Spanish?

The question seemed to produce the utmost confusion. A dozen hands went up. Guerrero pointed to little Jesus Juarez, whose Indian colouring and turned-down moustache proclaimed him a "typical" Mexican.

"Tu!" Guerrero said sternly. "De veras no entiendes espafiol?" Jesus lifted his brows in surprise and deprecation. "Pos, si, sefior jefecito, the Spanish I understand it very well. Is the English which I do not understand'." "Very well, then;" Guerrero said, "do not lift the hand. Lift the hand only if you do not understand both languages'." He repeated the explanation in English. Most of the hands went down. Only Moby Douglass and old Jose Arna' o Contreras kept theirs up. Guerrero decided to pick on Moby first.

"Well, big boy, where are you from-darkest Africa?" He got no laugh, and this annoyed him. "You don't savvy English?" he snapped.

"A'm American;" Moby said with basso impressiveness. "And A talk American, if that's what you mean ---"

"Oh, a joker;" Guerrero sneered. "You better find out what's funny and what ain't around here'." Silently Tranquilino applauded Moby. And yet, being the only Negro in the group, Moby shouldn't have to take the lead in this heckling.

Trank had Guerrero sized up as a careerist from Texas, determined to be twice as obnoxiously Texan as any Protestant Anglo, particularly tough on "ignorant peons" and "niggers'." He could be highly dangerous.

"What about you?" Guerrero turned on Jose Ama'o. "No entiendes espafiol, tu?"

"With your permission, sefior presidente, I will explain myself;" Jose Ama'o said with the formality of one who has at last been recognized by the chairman. "If there is here one who does not understand English and likewise does not understand Spanish equally, then he does not understand the sefior presidente's question whether he understands, because the little chief's question is spoken in the English and in the Spanish tongues solely. Therefore he does not lift up the hand in answer to the presidente's question. Dost thou understand, little sefior?"

Guerrero was both astonished and stumped. Trank could fairly see the wheels grinding in his stupid head. Jose Ama'o deserved a medal for this. But it was time he himself put in his oar. He spoke without permission.

[26. The California Quarterly J "Maybe I can help out here;" he said in English. "We got one man we don't know any language he does speak. We think he's arrested by mistake.'" "Yah, like me!" Polo Garda said-and ducked behind Mike Kovacs-which set all the prisoners laughing again.

"Shut up!" Guerrero yelled. "Any more of that, you hombres are off on the wrong foot here. Which is the man?" he asked.

Before Trank could move, Jose Ama'o lifted John Dombrowski's arm by the wrist. "Aquf 'sra;" he said, while John's big white teeth appeared in his luxuriant moustache. "Se llama Juan Dombraski. Todavfa es muy inteligente.'" Jose Ama'o sounded as if he were boasting about the accomplishments of a pet.

"All right, all right, he's so bright, you explain to him later. Now all of you fold your arms.'" He repeated the order in Spanish. "No, no, not that way. Keep both hands showing. Get that fist out from under your arm, there.'" Jose Ama'o had taken charge of old John to see that he followed suit. "Okay. Now, Rule Number One around here is that every time a guard or an officer comes to within five paces of you, no matter what you're doing you stop and stand and fold your arms like this, and don't talk unless he talks to you. You stay like that till they get five paces away from you; then you get back to whatever you were doing. Now maybe sometimes you're <loin' something and you don't see the guard comin' up behind you, and he'll say 'Attention!' And the minute you hear that you stop and fold your arms and shut up and wait till he goes by. There's plenty more rules, but if you start out right on this one you'll be okay on

the rest. Okay? No!" he commanded as several hands went up. "Save your questions till I get through tellin' 'em in Spanish.'" An Anglo trusty from the Warden's office came out and spoke to Guerrero. "Okay, save the rest of the questions;" Guerrero said, wiping his face with a khaki-coloured handkerchief. "The dumb ones ask the smart ones. Maybe you learn, maybe you never. Now when your name is called, you follow this man inside. There you'll be identified, get your number and your clothes, get assigned to a cell and so forth.'" He repeated in Spanish. "Okay, who's first?"

"Abeyta, Canuto;" the trusty said. "Avila, Manuel.'" No one moved, because he had pronounced them "A-bite-uh, Can-you-toe" and "A-vile-a, Man-you-ull.'" The Deputy Warden hastened to correct the pronunciations. Still no sign of motion. Trank was standing next to Canuto Abeyta; he poked him with his elbow.

"I call myself Canuto Abeyta, not Abeyta Canuto;" he whispered loudly. "Here they say the family name first;" Trank told him. "All right, all right;" Guerrero said, exasperated, "I'll do the talking. You! Step out here.'" Canuto shrugged and obeyed. Trank was scolding himself what was he [27. Mightier Than the Pen J doing helping out these jailers? He had acted out of habit his role of interpreter. There were lots of habits he was going to have to get over.

He figured quickly that in alphabetical order his name would be bracketed with that of John Dombrowski. His heart sank. John was a lovable old man, with unquenchable humor and bounce, but the thought of spending weeks, perhaps months, with a fell ow who couldn't talk, was hard to take.

To Trank's astonished delight the trusty called: "De Vacka, Trankwilino! Douglass, Mobby!" Moby and Trank grinned their pleasure at each other as they stepped in the office. Probably some clerk had misspelled old John's name as Dumbrowski. What a break!

Routines occupied the men till bedtime-except for one off-beat incident. When the bell rang for supper Tranquilino followed Moby to the end of the long line of prisoners waiting to file into the mess-hall. Almost immediately a prison guard came up to Moby.

"You're new, ain't you?" he said. "You don't belong here. Come on.'" He led the way to the head of the line. Moby and Tranquilino followed him, arms folded.

The head of the line was composed entirely of Negro prisoners, some twenty in all. Suddenly Trank understood that Moby was being moved up not because he was new but because he was a Negro and the prison had a policy of Jim-Crow segregation at meals. He had no business tagging along with Moby. But he'd be damned if he'd crawl back to his place now.

The guard opened up a space between the last of the Negroes and the first of the white prisoners.

"Get in there;" he told Moby, and moved on without noticing Trank who was half-hidden behind Moby's tremendous body.

The manoeuvre made Tranquilino the first white prisoner in line. Behind him a middle-aged Spanish-American informed him quietly, "Is not your place here?'" "The guard orders me here;" Trank said in a low voice. "I am together with this man!'" He nodded toward Moby. "We are new!'" "We hear about you;" the man said. "'Sta bueno!'" The doors opened and the line started into the mess-hall. It was a big barny place where footfalls echoed on a concrete floor between concrete walls. It was crowded with plain board tables and benches in rows. The Negroes quickly filled the farthest table and overflowed to the second.

Trank marched in Moby's footsteps. He heard the man behind him whisper loudly, "No, not there!" But he knew what he was doing now. He sat down next to Moby.

The Spanish-American behind him hesitated, then moved in next to Trank. Four more followed, Anglo and Spanish, to fill the table. Trank could feel all about him a tension greater than he felt in himself. No one spoke.

A Negro trusty at the head of the table slopped big ladlefuls of watery stew [28. The California Quarterly J into plates and passed them down. The moment they were served the men began to eat, avidly and silently. The room was filling up and the air was loud with the clatter of tableware.

Up to this point, men marching in had partly blocked the sight of those already seated. But now the guards around the door noticed something wrong.

One of them, tall and spare, came forward frowning. "What's goin' on here?" His eyes flashed over the six non-Negroes. "Which one of you birds pulled this one?"

The other five shrugged. The guard moved to Trank. "You," he said. "One of them Bowlshevicks just come in, huh?"

Trank met the man's eyes candidly. "I just got here, yeah," he said.

"Fast worker, ain't you," the guard said. "I suppose you're gonna claim you didn't know this was a nigger table." Trank felt heat rising inside his shirt. "What's that?" he asked.

"Did you lead that line in to here?" "No," Trank said. "I followed the line like everybody else." The guard addressed the middle-aged prisoner next to Trank. "This man horn in ahead of you in line?"

Trank broke in quickly. "One of the guards took us out of our place in line and brought us up to just behind the Negroes." "The 'Negroes; huh?" The guard grinned. "The 'Negroes;" he repeated, tasting the word like an outlandish fruit. "Pretty fancy with the lingo, ain't you. Now listen just for the record, these tables down here is for coloured. First white man in line, he don't move in here; he goes to the next table." Tranquilino had intended to let it go at that; he had made his point, he thought. But it was as if he spoke in spite of himself.

"You take me for a white man?" he asked. The guard frowned and scrutinized him a moment. Trank made no explanation, started eating as if the colloquy were over. "Hey, Bart!" the man called across to another guard by the door. "How many coloured in that bunch from Reata?"

"Only just one, Les. Big son of a bitch." This seemed to amuse the Negroes who, heads low over their plates, exchanged sidewise glances.

"What are you givin' me?" Les frowned at Trank. "You mean you got Indian blood, or what?"

Trank kept on eating. "Fifty percent," he said.

"Hell, every Mexican in here's part Indian. That don't count." "Well"-Trank looked up with no attempt to conceal his contempt-"I wouldn't know all the fine points of race preju--"

"You know now!" Les bellowed. "One more crack out of you --!" "You want us to move now, Les?" one of the other men asked. It was too late, of course; the men were half through their meal already. But the question [29. Mightier Than the Pen] tion served to mollify Les and distract him from Tranquilino-also to warn Trank not to go too far.

"Dah, what the hell, finish up," Les said. "But I'm watchin' you from now out," he warned as he turned on his heel.

Tension at the table drained away. Tranquilino thought the men masticated their stringy meat more heartily. Naturally any prisoner enjoyed whatever was at the expense of any guard; but there was more to it than that. Negroes and Spanish-Americans were all victims of discrimination regardless of their technical status as "white" or "coloured". But what about that Anglo across the table (a transplanted Texan or Oklahoman, judging from his speech)? The guy's long lugubrious puss gave Trank no clue.

At last the fellow lifted his head from his plate, looked blankly at Trank an instant, then turned and addressed his neighbor.

"Good ole Les;" he mumbled, his mouth full. "He sho' stands up for us whaat-men's raaguts'." In the act of turning back and lowering his face over his plate, again his eyes met Trank's for the briefest flicker.

It was almost a wink. Trank made no reply. Already he was a marked man, and this guy might be a stoolie.

Supper over, Tranquilino made for the so-called "recreation room" in search of writing materials for the difficult letter he had to write to his wife. Moby accompanied him. Trank felt dissatisfied now with the way he had handled the incident at table. In itself his initiative in leading the "white" men to the "coloured" table had been all right; but his words, instead of focussing on the issue, had blurred it.

Moby was not so critical. "Sure as hell A couldn't a-done as good;" he said. "A'm too slow'." "Trouble with you;" Trank said impatiently, "you're a goddam white chauvinist'." "Them's fightin' words, brother'." Moby forced a laugh. "First time anyone ever called me a thing like that'." "Then why keep saying you're slow? I was slow. I made a bad mistake. We had unity there. That trusty could a-told me I was in the wrong pew. So could the others. Nobody did. They were all behind me. Christ almighty, I could have said the word Jim Crow!"

"You didn't need to. Don't worry, it was the one word ever' mother's son had on his mind'." "You mean you're satisfied with what happened?" "A don't say that. A man can always do better than what he does. But what A say is, you want to be God'." Moby grinned as Trank pulled a long face. "You got to do ever'thing perfect. A ain't kid din'. You got to be better'n good-Lenin or nothin'. But Jim Crow been king a long time. Take more'n a minute to knock him off'." Tranquilino was silent. Moby was so right about him...

[30. The California Quarterly J

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Cry Baby Cry

Ruth V. Goodwin

MARION knew what had happened when the white nurse lifted her stethoscope. All pain stopped. It was not worth while to hurt any more. The nurse looked at her quickly, then left the room, poor thing. She must have been frightened in her starched way.

Marion smoothed the white sheet about her breast with approval. Relax, her mind told her. She obeyed. Now there was nothing more to do.

The orderlies came with a stretcher and she was lifted tenderly on a cushioned slab, taken to the operating room. She was a cozy cocoon in a white perambulator with hushed, quiet wheels.

Dr. Haran told Marion she was very brave. He seemed as frightened as the nurse in his doctor way. It might have been, Marion observed, the cold whiteness of them. They wore white masks over their mouths and the mask bellied out from their lips as though blown by a wind of fear.

But to Marion, the cold was kind, considerate. It covered all the crying pain of last night. She lay now in marshmallow whiteness.

The operating room was busy with nurses and doctors, all stepping quietly so they would not break the crackling ice. Marion smiled at them kindly they were so tense. They should really learn to relax, to take it easy. They should put up their feet on a white cushion (like Marion's), rest their heads, wrap themselves in white sheaths.

The room's walls splashed silver and sunshine in her eyes, bouncing from the glitter of steel instruments. These were precisely arranged with diamond neatness on a white towel.

For a moment there was red fire behind the casing of her forehead. It was a warning. (Wasn't there a baby somewhere in this?) Then the cold fought back, closing down, and Marion said Goodbye, baby. And she said Now get this disgusting thing off my stomach so I can breathe.

Dr. Haran stood over her like a pylon, his head lofty and small in the distance. His eyes, though, were much nearer than his face. So close they were, so watery brown, that they were two fishing holes in the river ice.

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So Marion decided to be a fish and she floated in Dr. Haran's eyes for a while, waiting for the silver hook to lure her upward. When it came, the thrilling flash of it flipped her upside down and she was in ecstasy.

I love oh my beloved Dr. Haran, she told him. I am dying and I'm greatly, hurtling in love.

For this was a perfect day to lie with her love on an ice floe, flopped and dying on damp marble....

Here came a sudden command from Marion to the deep well of Marion. She turned inward and appraised her opponent with cunning. I won't die, I promise, she promised.

Then tell them and they'll do something about this.... Obediently, because she had no more strength to argue, Marion mentioned aloud that she was feeling weak. She tried not to be too dramatic about it. Just a hint she gave them.

"Shock;" said Dr. Haran who was again on his pylon-peak. "Oxygen.. '" She might have laughed at his pat remark but the mask was soft and rubbery, smelling of suffocation.

Marion threw her head from one side to the other for escape. A rasping began in the dark, central coil of her brain.

Her love for Dr. Haran was gone. She hated him now, for he would murder their love and hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. Where, she screamed silently, oh where was the honor and the glory these days? Where was the romance of duelling-oaks and guillotines?

But Dr. Haran made his apology. "We can't give you a general anaesthetic, Marion!' The craftiness of it, you see? He'd always called her Mrs. Westcott before. She'd not give him the satisfaction of letting him know she heard:

"... novocaine and that's all. I'm sorry.. '" Well, get on with it, she told him severely. Get about your business and make it a clean death so there'll be no blood for the poor janitor to clean. He deserves a raise but you'll put him off with some excuse or other. Like Sorry old man, but you

know what scalpels cost these days, and what with the high cost of dying...

... So the fiends opened her up as they would lance a boil and tried to see if she would cry with the hurt. But Marion snuggled down in her coolness. She would impress them with her nonchalance, her airy aplomb: - and by the bye, if you hear a baby's noise that will be my son. In case you're interested. Nothing? Well, that's the way things are....

"It's a dirty shame;" Dr. Haran said. "A dirty shame!." He might have been a terrible child, anyway. With allergies and pimples. With nails in torn pockets. So we'll just be brave, very brave. Dim the lights....

The pain tried to burn in skyrocket but was stopped by the gentle ice that covered Marion for the entire period of the Glacial Age.

[32. The California Quarterly J "It's all over, Marion;" Dr. Haran finally informed her. "Now we can give you some gas to stitch you up!." Yes, please do. Oh, thank you so much. Boommmmp, bzzzz, bloooomp, bzzzzzzzzz...

When she opened her eyes, they'd put her in a bed. Robert had her hand covered with his and Dr. Haran leaned against the radiator by the window. Both watched her. Waiting for her discomfort, she supposed. But all she felt was her soft pillow, her lazy arms and feet pointed beneath a blanket.

Still, if they were to continue this plot, she should whisper (tremulously): "The baby...?" And Dr. Haran would shake his head in sorrow. "I'm so sorry, Mrs. Westcott, but the baby is.. '." "Oh, my darling;" Robert could say then, taking her head upon his manly shoulder, "Let me comfort you!." Then they would tell her there would be no more round-headed babies with brown hair like Robert's for her to hold.

Suddenly, she was bored with all this. This silent moment in which they waited for her to come in on cue was too tense. She asked them, trying not to make her voice sound like an invalid's: "Was it a boy?"

Dr. Haran began pontifically, "These things happen sometimes, Mrs. Westcott!." (Did you notice she was Mrs. Westcott now?) "Not often, you understand. But when the placenta covers the opening there is usually a haemorrhage and the baby.. '." He opened his palms. "Physically you're not damaged and you ought to be able to have at least two more children after this!." (Oh, my brethren!) "I shouldn't advise any more than that

with such operations. Still, you are young.. '!' How he did run on, didn't he? So it was settled she didn't have to ask. It was possible to have more babies after one was lost. Truth was more efficient than fiction. Next year she'd have another baby. They could put in her reservation now. It just took her longer than other women. More like an elephant, Marion was. An elephant's gestation period was-oh, look it up in the encyclopaedia. Anyway, no harm was done.

Robert was squeezing Marion's hand. This was the first thing in a very long time that hurt, really hurt. She knew what he wanted. Strings of him pulled at her, trying to bind his husbandness to whatever it was he thought was still the wif eness in Marion. She might have been caught in the net, so she did not look at him but turned to watch Dr. Haran again.

Dr. Haran was really a tie-salesman. The kind of ties that he sold were handpainted and made in Japan. He would like long, loud discussions with plenty of satisfying haggle over the fee. He was considered the best doctor in the city, yet even now, Marion decided, he must be wondering if he should charge them standard rates for this fiasco. Or perhaps give them a twenty percent discount? Marion peered at him closely to see if he was kneading his paws to receive their gold, but he was very clever and his embalmed stare did not betray him. Nor show a glimmer of his lust.

[33. Cry Baby Cry J Surely the visiting hour must be over by now. When did they plan to leave? These two men, Robert and Dr. Haran, were intruders. It was incongruous, almost obscene for them to be here in this white, women's world.

Marion slipped her hand from Robert's, giving him a pat in parting. "Goodby," she said. "Do come again, won't you?"

He kissed her. "I'll phone your mother'." He said it sadly, in a whisper that was like a secret.

Dr. Haran had a different excuse. He mumbled a word about another patient and left quickly.

Marion wriggled her bare toes and felt release. Now her new life could begin. She waited for a nurse to come measure her temperature and take down the screens from her bed.

Miss Peters was the same nurse who had shaved Marion the day before. Miss Peters was crisply saltine and her shoes crunched into the

room in a straight thrust of duty. There was no nonsense to her, this woman.

She nodded to Marion, acknowledging their previous acquaintance, took her pulse with a daintiness that would not soil her fingers, made a precise notation in her black notebook, moved Marion's box of tissues from right to left of the table and handed her a water-glass.

"You must drink plenty of water;" Miss Peters said. "It flushes out the kidneys.'" She inserted the cold glass tube between Marion's lips and the business was smooth and perfect until a bit of ice stuck in the bottom of the straw. The water ceased to come through. Miss Peters raised her eyebrows and Marion felt an instant of spanked panic. But the ice floated away and then she was able to drink nearly a full glass of water.

Good, very good. Miss Peters left, her oxfords squeaking approval. A girl in the next bed was sitting up against a pillow and writing a letter. She smiled at Marion. "Feeling better now?"

Marion was delighted with such neighborliness, glad she had insisted on a semi-private room so she could have company. "Much;" she told the girl. "Very much better, thank you.'" "Was it a boy or a girl?" The girl held her pen above the paper as though she waited only for Marion's answer to complete the news item. She would record the sex of Marion's child for the enlightenment of whomsoever she was writing. And that person would probably respond with enthusiastic congratulations Say hello to your roommate (ha. ha.) in the next bed and tell her I'm glad she had a...

"A boy;" Marion filled in. "Mine, too.'" The girl's smile was that of a conspirator who has discovered another member of the conspiracy.

The girl told Marion her name was Margie, and Marion felt this was good and proper also. Like the Gold Dust Twins, the two names had perfect alliteration.

[34. The California Quarterly]

Margie was a ballet dancer, or had been before she was married. "That's why I had such an easy time. Because my pelvic muscles are so well developed.'" Marion began to feel tired. She'd had an exciting day, when you thought of it. But she decided to stay awake and see if she and Margie would get to discuss Nijinsky and Diaghileff. A book she once read had implied interesting relations between the two. Perhaps Margie would have the inside dope.

"My baby is on a three-hour schedule;" Margie insisted. "I'm trying to breast-feed it. Alex bought bottles and they had a set of directions that went with them but I couldn't figure them out. It must be easier to do as Nature does, wouldn't you think?"

Marion even loved the way Margie talked, the way she forgot all her r's not as in the South, but as though r's were too harsh for those soft lips. "Nay-tuah;" was the way Margie said it.

"Like cows;" Marion agreed with her. "Or elephants.'" Miss Peters came in again, interrupting them to ask Marion the secret question. She bent down until her nose was in close proximity with Marion's ear. But the ice-water had not yet gone to Miss Peters' goal. Marion told her the sad news as delicately as possible, hoping she would not hurt Miss Peters' feelings. Two creases, like exclamation points, appeared on Miss Peters' forehead; she nodded in sorrow and left the room to find a better customer.

"You don't get sick, do you?" Margie admired Marion when the nurse had left. "I was sick as a cat for hours from the gas.'" "Tell me all about the ballet;" Marion asked Margie brightly, with her best pink-ruffled smile. "What sort of dances do you do?"

She closed her eyes so she could better listen.... Well, there was a red and silver dance with little cherubs, fat, with silver dimples. There were silver tulip trees and a silver moon and white feet floating. Red lips and white fluttering hands and silken gauze in a deep blue midnight. A silver and diamond proscenium that dipped over time and put it in a small space; a marble mountain that never changed or moved or crumpled into dust....

"You've been asleep;" someone said. "What? Oh. Thank you, I will take a little soup, just a little.'" "They told me what happened while you were sleeping;" Margie said. Her face was loose as it tried to make up its mind whether to be reproachful of Marion's deceit or to demonstrate respect for Marion's sorrow.

"Is it true what they say about Diaghileff?" Marion asked Margie in order to apologize. "Or is it back-stage gossip?"

But Margie only stared at her, the face changing now to definite reproach. Miss Peters came in. "Why you didn't eat a bit of your bouillon, Mrs. Westcott. Now we must keep up our strength, mustn't we?"

"Yes, we really must;" Marion agreed politely. Then she fell asleep again.

On the second day in the hospital, Marion discovered there was a tree out- [35. Cry Baby Cry J side her window with a scar in the center of the trunk where a large branch had been cut off. The scar was nearly a perfect circle with a bulging, gray rim that sucked down to the center and covered the wound of the tree. A slim, green suckling-wasn't that the name for it?-waved over the scar as though protecting it, but so inadequately. The suckling seemed too frail, too weak to be of much use to anyone at all.

It was during a brief gap in hospital routine, right after her sponge bath and just before the morning temperature, that Marion discovered this flaw. She began to experiment with it, for it would require all her concentration.

First she unfocussed her eyes until the window was double. Then, softened, thus diluted, the window seemed no longer to be there. At this point, the scar of the tree increased its importance. It grew until Marion was able to think herself down the rough mountain of bark at the scar's rim, to slip to the warm, gray-dark heart.

When she'd perfected this technique, she was able thereafter to sit there whenever she pleased, laugh up at the crazy Margie who was breast-feeding her baby or at Miss Peters with her bed-pan.

She was very happy, always completely happy in her hiding-place. Or would have been if everyone had left her alone. But at two o'clock in the afternoon and at eight o'clock at night there were visiting-hours. And oh, dear! it seemed the hospital was not too particular whom they allowed to come in then. All sorts of people trooped to Marion's bed at that time. Odd people with strange masks on their faces as though they were made of plaster. Marion remembered most of them vaguely as friends she and Robert had beaten at bridge, danced with at the Club, and so forth. But they now had no relation to her new life; she wished to reject them. Yet she was very polite to them when you considered how much they interrupted her, that is. They always left after a while. Then again, when she had settled herself in the tree, they came back, called to her. Are you glad to see us? they asked.

"Your mother telephoned and said she was taking the next train down;" Robert said.

"Really?" Marion asked. She mentally checked the fact that she would soon have still another sad visitor. She saw a cloud in the sky just then and this was good, for they needed rain-she and her suckling.

But Robert had a white sheet of paper in his hand that he pushed over on her lap. "We have to sign this," he told her.

"What is it?" "A release. If we sign it, the hospital will dispose of the baby's body-after an autopsy, of course," He rubbed his forehead with the hand that held the paper and it waved like a white flag. "Otherwise, we have to take care of the body ourselves. Do you want to do that?"

"What? Oh.. ." Marion had a sudden, hysterical vision of the baby's funeral with pomp and ceremony, with flowers and organ music. "Heavens, no. Let them do what they want with it," for what possible interest did [36. The California Quarterly J she have in the thing? A thing that was so wasteful, so lacking in growth.

At night Marion decorated the tender leaves of the suckling with stars which she plucked sometimes with her fingers and then, playfully, with her bare toes. The stars were cool, pretty and bright.

"Roll over, Mrs. Westcott." This was the night nurse with a dagger in her hand. "Give me your hip, please." Marion always said Ouch and the night nurse said Did I hurt you? and this was all they expected of her at night. She liked the nights best.

Of course at first this game with the suckling was a joke; something to do, probably, with the only book on Freud that Marion had ever read. Calmly, clearly she analyzed her imagination, her use of symbolic terms the way she called it a 'suckling; for example. This was simple logic. Child's play to the freshman psychologist. And after she had gone over this subject several times, feeling very clear about the process, she would retreat to the tree-scar, rather apologetically, to be sure, for her darling suckling had not read Freud and must never have a rejection trauma.

She fed it small tidbits from the dinners they gave her on a tray. She gave it fruit salad and cream puddings. "Very good for your muscles," she said solemnly.

"You are not eating," Miss Peters admonished. "But I do!" Marion insisted. "I ate every bit of the asparagus." She hated asparagus and it was because of this she would not give it to her suckling.

The day the suckling acquired a new leaf Marion was outrageously happy. Wasn't it silly? If she told anyone they'd laugh, yet she felt she ought to celebrate somehow.

"Look at this sweetest dear," Margie said to her, holding up the baby that had just been brought in. "I could swear he's smiling. They say a baby can't smile when they're this young, but does that look like gas to you?"

"Certainly not," Marion comforted her. "I'd say it was a true genuine smile the like of which no baby has ever made before." She would have expanded on this theme. In fact she prepared another comment that could be delivered with gusto along the same motif, but Margie was staring at her with strange intensity. As though she waited for something. As Robert and Dr. Haran had waited. The way all the people who came to visit Marion were waiting.

Margie had risen from her bed holding the baby. She walked over to Marion. "Here," she said, holding out the white bundle. "Would you like to hold him for a while?" It was only reflex that made Marion hold out her arms—nothing more. The baby's face was quite red, she noticed, and there were white patches on his nostrils.

From the way Margie stood, the tense straightness of her back, Marion suddenly realized that she was playing a role in some private drama all her own. Margie's tones were pear-shaped. "Isn't he darling?" she crooned to Marion.

[37. Cry Baby Cry J And what was Margie's experiment to prove? that Marion could be a bereaved Madonna with this tight roll of flesh belonging to another woman on her lap? That now the tears should fall and everyone should clap? Oh, but this was the purest height of something or other...

Still, Marion tried to put the expression on her face that Margie desired. She let her lips tremble. "I know.. ." Margie said. Her tone said she understood ALL. "A friend of mine lost her baby a few months ago. Gosh, when she sees my little sweetheart, you can bet she'll make a fuss over him." Yes, without a doubt, without a doubt. Marion could no longer trust herself with this child. She handed him back to Margie with no good answer ready. For how shameful can a new mother be? She apparently will milk any situation to call attention to the fact that she has proved herself fertile and productive. For what? For limp hands and

knobby knees and pointed heads that were mottled at the birthing. Nothing more than this.

So when she had gotten rid of Margie (by saying she had to read this book Robert had brought her for he had to return it to the library soon), she slipped back to her tree. She crooned to it, told the slim green thing that it had beautiful flat leaves.

Margie's minor drama only a small rift in the routine. The third day Dr. Haran told Marion she could sit on the edge of the bed and dangle her feet. The fourth day Miss Peters helped her take a few steps about the room. Margie, of course, had been walking since the day after her delivery but Marion was given no such special privileges. Well, who cared?

To prove to herself how little she desired such actions, Marion walked as far as the hallway on the fifth day then turned back to her bed again. She walked right in front of Miss Peters, passing before her twice so that Miss Peters could see this was something Marion could do if this was her pleasure. But when she reached her bed she decided to stay there. Though Dr. Haran and Robert and even Miss Peters tried to get her up, Marion stayed in bed. She refused even to let her feet dangle. It was such a silly business!

On Sunday, the seventh day, Miss Peters came into the room with a Bible in her hand. She would, she declared, read to them a chapter or two since it was their misfortune to miss church this morning.

"Miss Peters, dear," Marion said raising her hand as she used to in school, "you will have to excuse me for I must leave the room!" "I thought you had made it a policy to stay in bed!" Miss Peters acted out her surprise.

"This is an emergency," Marion excused herself. She took a magazine with her and sat on the toilet seat of the Ladies' Room at the end of the hall, reading the magazine, wondering how long it would take Miss Peters to finish reading her Bible chapter to Margie so that Marion could return to bed.

[38. The California Quarterly]

Marion had not meant to insult Miss Peters deliberately, yet now began a new phase of their relationship. Before this, Marion had been

one of Miss Peters' most obedient patients Miss Peters the firm, kindly guardian of Marion.

What made it all worse was that Margie left the next day, taking her baby all dressed in fluffy white dress and a lace bonnet. Marion was sorry to see her go, for she felt there were possibilities in Margie. If they'd met at a different time they might have been great friends. Margie asked Marion for her telephone number, promised to 'get in touch' with her when she had a minute to spare between breast feedings. Marion told Margie their number was in the book which left the situation open, as it were, to the public, and spared both of them any further private connections.

Oddly, with Margie gone, Marion's room now seemed crowded with people who all took it for granted she would not want to be left alone. Dr. Haran wandered in at all hours (didn't he have any other patients, for heaven's sake?) and walked straight to Marion's bed without having to chat with Margie first. He was most interested in Marion's temperature, her elimination, her food intake, the amount of exercise she took during the day, the state of the bandages on her abdomen. A practical man, Dr. Haran enjoyed discussing concrete details.

So did Miss Peters. But her discussions with Marion probed more deeply. When she discussed Marion's food intake it was in terms of vitamins and their relation to various parts of Marion's body. Oh, yes, she knew all about Marion's body; had known it from way back. They could both talk more freely (Miss Peters implied) now that Margie was gone.

Determined as Miss Peters was to restore Marion's body, Marion still found ways to cheat her. The game became more interesting by its complications.

For example when Miss Peters took Marion's temperature, Marion found she could retreat to her hiding-place in the tree so long as Miss Peters kept her eyes on her watch. This way Marion scarcely felt those warm, bony fingers on her pulse.

Then if Miss Peters noticed she was gone, and said: "Day-dreaming again?" Marion could be quite severe with her, tell her in a lady-like way to mind her pulse-counting or the authorities might have to investigate. The point was Marion's, yet Miss Peters, annoyingly, would not concede this.

"You ought to snap out of it;" Miss Peters said. "You've been mooning around long enough." "I don't know what you mean;" Marion told her. "I'm really supremely happy." "Sometimes when I come in here you're all straightened out under that sheet, with your hands folded like you thought you were a corpse. How do you suppose your husband feels when he sees you like that, eh?" Miss Peters was a dirty fighter. To think of Robert interrupted Marion's straight line of thought.

[39. Cry Baby Cry J "And another thing you never eat. Do you think I like carrying heavy trays in here and have 'em just as heavy when I take them out?"

This was Miss Peters' idea of humor. When she said this she fluttered her short eyelashes to imitate a twinkle. Miss Peters was not the type who should try a twinkle. "You have been our largest contributor to the hospital's garbage;" Miss Peters said.

"You are very right;" said Marion. "I've just been thinking about that." Though before this she hadn't given it a moment's thought.

Now Marion tried to visualize the garbage the vegetable matter, the orange peels and dried scrambled eggs. That's where the baby was, of course. That's where they'd put him (after autopsy) because they'd signed a paper to say that they could. And now he could hold a banana skin in a brother's handclasp, wander in the limbo of coffee-grounds. All cells without life, without breath; food for porkers. Compost for trees. Nothing can either be created or destroyed-the garbage, the dead, the lost, the tossed away nothings.

"You're a stubborn young woman;" Miss Peters said, shaking down the thermometer.

"Are you trying to make me cry?" Marion asked her, before the tube was put between her lips. "But I won't. I never have, you know." "You'll feel better when you do;" Miss Peters told her wisely. "It always helps." "That's what I've heard;" Marion said, dividing the words through the thermometer in her mouth.

"Hush, now. Don't talk any more;" chided Miss Peters. "I only want this to take two minutes. I'm rushed today." Oh, how Marion hated that woman. Yet whenever she left the room Marion wanted her back again. This desire was akin to that which is satisfied by rubbing one's tongue over a sore tooth.

Only to prove Miss Peters was in error, Marion began to eat more from her tray. This should certainly make Miss Peters' joke rather flat.

The morning Dr. Haran removed her stitches she ate nearly all of her lunch, saving only one tomato-slice for her suckling. But the tomato-slice was rich in vitamin C, was it not? "For sturdy chlorophyll;" she apologized to one of the tender leaves. There were no reproaches from the suckling. No tears, for this is one of the priceless qualities of green things.

When Miss Peters saw the tray, she sniffed. "I'm beginning to have hopes for you;" she said. "Maybe Dr. Haran will let you go home tomorrow if you're a good girl;" "I've thought some of staying here forever;" Marion said to her. "We need your bed. Next week we're expecting twenty-three new mothers. Think of it! I don't know where I'll get the time to do all I have to do;" "You could use Margie's bed;" Marion suggested. Miss Peters seemed puzzled for an instant, then her forehead cleared.

[40. The California Quarterly J "Oh, you mean that nice little girl who was in that other bed, don't you? She had a lovely baby, don't you think?"

So that was the end of Margie. Gone, as far as Miss Peters was concerned. There was a certain amount of reserve on Miss Peters' face the next day, as though Marion, too, was already gone. Miss Peters appeared to be calculating the amount of time it would take to put fresh sheets on the bed to get it ready for the next delivery. She had brought in Marion's suitcase and laid it on the chair by the wall, opened it, picked out Marion's underthings from the bottom and handed them to her to put on.

Marion took them from her hand. "You've been a good nurse to me;" she said.

Miss Peters straightened her lips. "I'm sure I've tried to be;" she sighed. She patted Marion's knee absently. "Your husband's waiting!" Her confidential tone implied that husbands should never be allowed to see their wives putting on clothes.

Marion turned her back to Miss Peters to have her button the back of her blouse. Then she stood up. "I'm ready;" she said.

Miss Peters looked at her feet. "Aren't you going to put on your shoes and stockings?" She looked shocked.

"Barefoot I came;" Marion said. "Barefoot I'll go.'" She stood for a moment, still with her back to Miss Peters, facing the window.

"No;" she whispered quietly to the suckling that was waving to her from the tree. "Don't turn around. I want to remember you-just like this-always.'" There was the business now of picking up the suitcase to go.

"You might get athlete's foot if you walk that way in the corridor.. '" But the warning flowed past, beyond Marion, echoing before her, as though Miss Peters had sent the words on ahead to herald Marion's departure from this room.

There was the hard, timeless marble of the hallway under Marion's bare feet, cool, even, resistant to the introduction of her arches.

Dr. Haran, like the polite host that he was, waited with Robert in front of the red settee in the reception office. This was where they would sign Marion out from the records.

Robert seemed glad to have her back. He took Marion in his arms and hugged her, kissing her on the neck where it always tickled, where he knew it always did. His lips were warm and Marion wished, sincerely, that she'd wanted him to kiss her. But all around her the hospital was saying goodbye, rejecting her, not desiring her for she was useless.

Yet she was determined not to wallow in this sense of rejection. She would be (again) very brave.

Dr. Haran, the Japanese hand-painted tie-salesman, smoked a cigar. The rich smoke blew through Marion's nostrils, forcing her awareness of the love she'd once had for him. He had a fat stomach; she must have been mad!

[41. Cry Baby Cry J "Before I forget;" Dr. Haran began to share men's business with Robert through the smoke of his cigar, "I ought to tell you that the child's heart beat for fifteen minutes after birth. This means you may deduct the usual dependency allotment from your income tax this year.'" "What?" Marion wondered if she could have heard him at all. "Oh, ah-h, Mrs. Westcott.. '" Dr. Haran's eyelids blinked over his waterbrown pupils. He was embarrassed, wondering if he'd been indelicate.

Robert took her wrist, holding it tightly, waiting for her communication so that he might understand her.

"What do you mean?" Marion asked them. "How's that?" A gray ash fell from Dr. Haran's cigar. "A technicality, Mrs. Westcott;" he cleared

phlegm nervously. "Since the-uh child's heart was beating, he was legally alive though we could never get him to breathe.'" The child. The dear little boy; the child. "He did?" Marion meant the maleness of this tiny heart. "He did? Well, then'." She looked down at her feet and wriggled one toe. A warm rush of wind rose in her-about fifteen minutes' worth. It was enough.

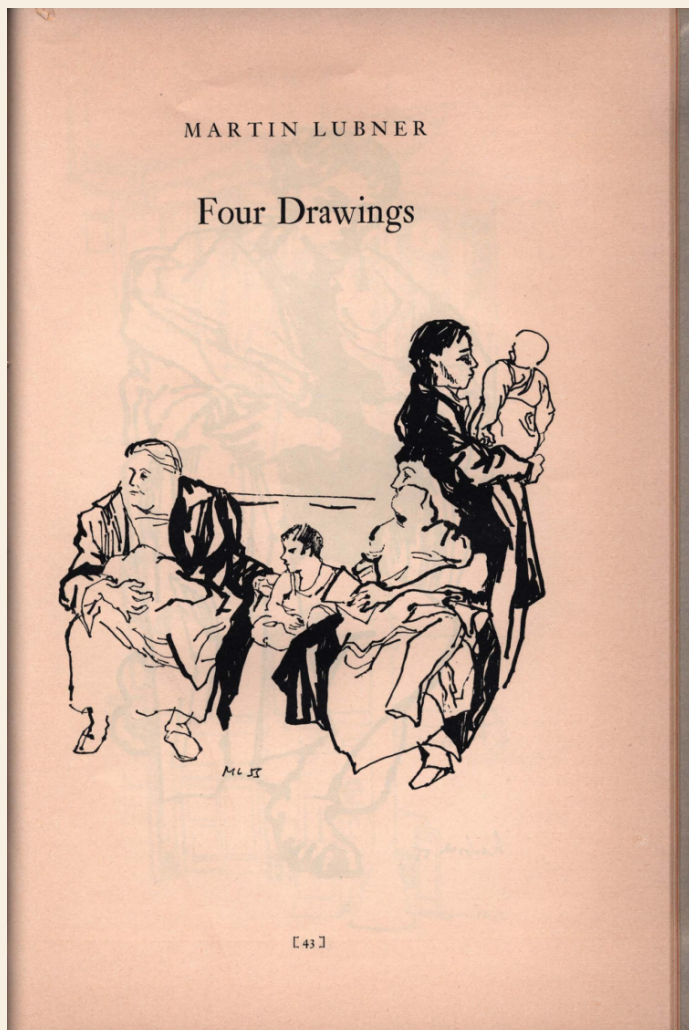
She sat down on the red settee. "I must put on my shoes;" she said, explaining it. And the tears that fell from her eyes as she bent over to open her suitcase fell on Robert's hand that was still on her wrist.

[42. The California Quarterly J

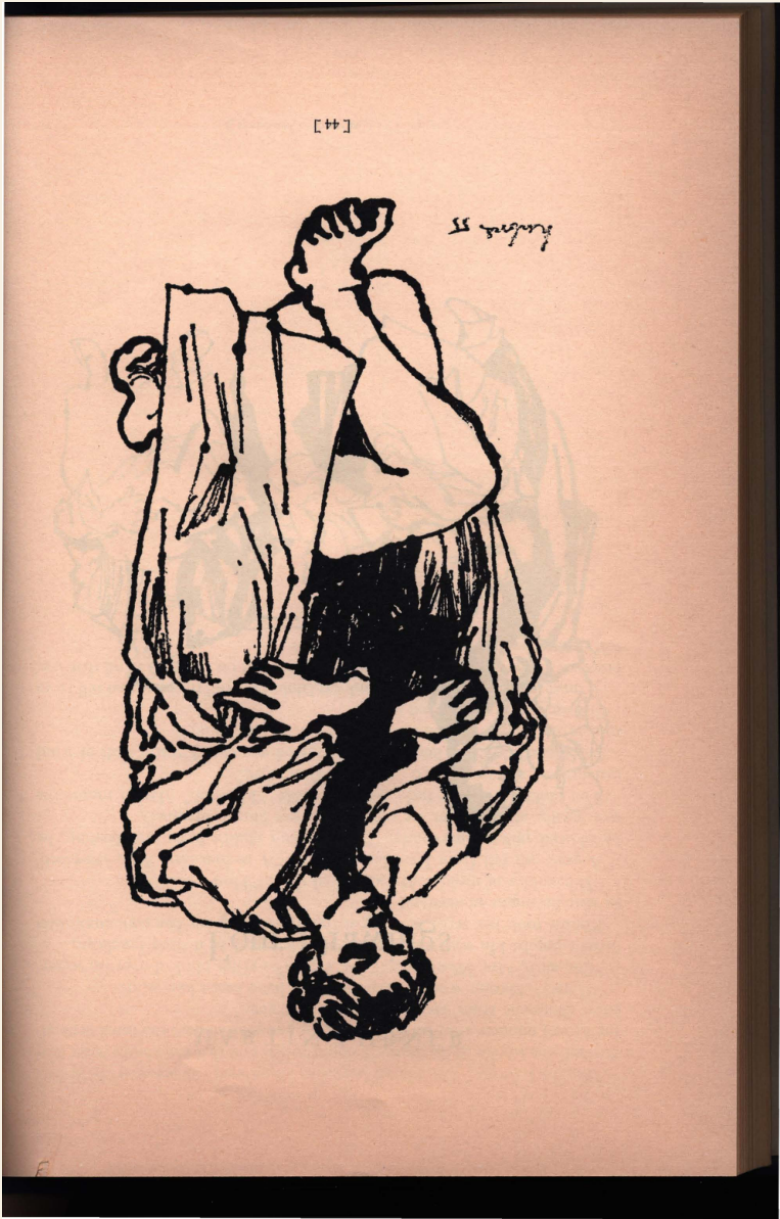
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Four Drawings

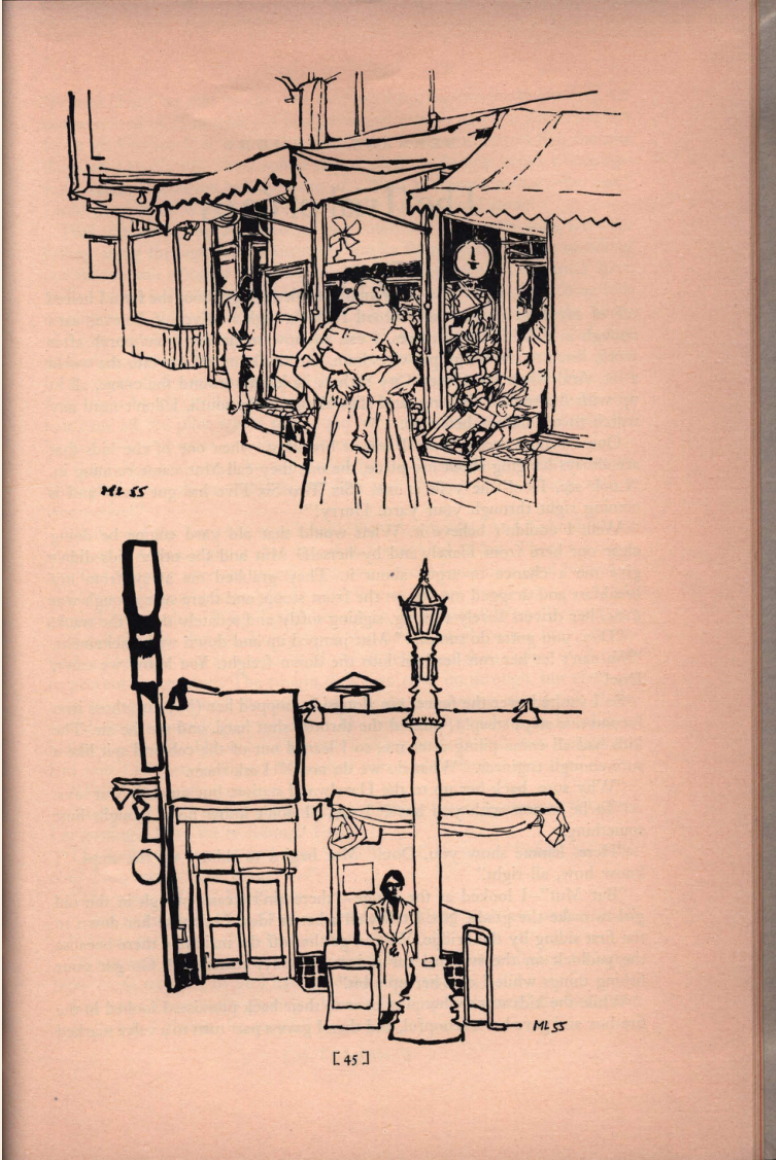
Martin Lubner



Original artwork plate / scan page 45



Original artwork plate / scan page 46



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The Trial of 6265

Bernard Raymund

The Trial of 626r The Trial of 626r ONE of the nice things about the farm I heired off of my Dad is that the railroad runs through it. Even if I never earn enough in this life to go places, I can anyhow sit on my front porch after work, listen to the telegraph wires hum, and think myself out into the world a bit. And when the Queen City slithers its length around the curve, all lit up with fluorescent lighting, and slips along to the south, I don't need any watch to tell me it's bed-time.

One morning, years back, I was at breakfast, when one of the kids that are always hanging about my place, the one they call Mut, came running in. "Look see, Doc!" he yells at me. "Six Two Six Five has got away and is coming right through your yard. Hurry!"

Well, I couldn't believe it. What would that old yard engine be doing clear out here from Hazelwand by herself? Mut and the other kids didn't give me a chance to argue about it. They grabbed me away from my breakfast and dragged me out on the front stoop, and there sure enough was 6265, her drivers barely turning, sighing softly and sedately down the track. "Doc, you gotta do sumpin!" Mut jumped up and down with excitement. "We can't let her run head-on into the down freight. You know we can't, Doc!"

So I vaulted over the fence, ran alongside, hopped her (boy, are those iron locomotive steps steep!), pushed the throttle shut hard, and set the air. The kids had all come piling after me, so I leaned out of the cab and spit like a sure-enough engineer. "What do we do now?" I ask them.

"Why sure, back her up to the Hazelwand station, but quick!" Mut says. "To be honest with you boys;' I say, "I don't know how. I might bust something'." "Here, lemme show you, Doc!" Mut begins to shinny up the steps. "I know how, all right'." "But Mut"-I looked at the gauge-"there ain't steam enough in the old girl to make the grade. No, I tell y'all a better idea. Let's take her down to the first siding by the bridge. We can get her off the main line there because the padlock on the switch-lever is just a phony, remember? Go get your fishing things while I coal her up a bit'."

While the kids went whooping over to their back premises I looked in the fire-box and gave her a scoopful, and then I gave a part turn to a valve marked

[46 J

"Forced Draft:' so that by the time they got back she was sizzling pretty. Of course not all of those kids got backi being subject to parental authority; but I was glad to see Mut was still with us-and his special friend Sid, the one they call The Mouth-also a couple of tadpoles, the Burress twins, whose separate names I've never had the hang of. "Now get over on that other seat;' I told them, "and whatever you do, let that whistle-cord alone!"

Well, she started up as smooth as you could ask, and pretty soon we were rolling along through the country, the smoke flying, the kids like to falling out of the cab window on their side. If anybody seen us, we must have looked like a holy show me bare-headed and in my T-shirt, and those kids making more noise than 6265 herself. I got her slowed down for the siding all right, and Mut swung out and run ahead, and it was just like I said, that padlock never was any good, just put there I guess for looks. Mut swung the lever, highballed me through, and then set the switch clear again. I stopped 6265 right by the bridge, the kids piling out to take their fishing poles and bait cans off the pilot where they'd put 'em, and then we ducked under the barbed wire and went out on the abutment to fish.

"Gee;' Mut said when he had baited his hook and got the Burress twins untangled from theirs, "this is the first time I ever went fishing with a locomotive!"

1:

"Yeah, and the last time too, I bet;' The Mouth said. And I shouldn't be surprised if he was right at that. But then it was kind of fun. There we were, our feet hanging over the water while we watched our lines, and behind us old 6265 singing a little to herself while her air pumps every once in a while gargled "Awee-slup'.' Why, I guess we almost forgot we didn't really own her.

Not for long, though. Pretty soon the down freight came by, hell-forleather like Mut said it would. And we all felt good about what

we'd done to prevent an accident. The freight didn't go right on through, but clattered to a stop right beyond the switch, the brakeman swung down out of the crumb box, a purse-y guy we didn't like much, buttoned up to his chin in hickory coveralls. He stood a minute looking at 6265 and then come over and rested his two hands on the barbed wire and looked at me-hard.

"Well?" the brakeman says. "Hello yourself;" says I, not knowing anything better to answer. "I believe I'm getting a bite. We're fishing;" I says.

The brakeman turned and spit. "So I notice;" he says. "Fishin' an' what else? Now looky here, Mister--"

"The name is Doc;" I told him. "Glad to know it. Well, Doc, you're comin' along with me, understand?" "Where to?" I asks. "And what about these kids?" "Nemmind where to. An' it'll do those kids good to walk fer a change. Now come on over; or do I have to come after you?"

Just when I was really getting a bite. "Climb up in the cab;" the brakeman says, "while I throw the switch.'" [47. Trial of 626 5 J

I

"You want me to drive her for you?" I asks him. "I do not;" the shack snarls at me. "And if you touch a thing up there while my back's turned... So the freight started up and we went along behind slow in reverse. Really it was an experience watching him handle 6265. I said something about how instructive it was. The shack looked at me sort of disgusted like. "As a matter o' fact;" he growls, "I could lose my seniority <loin' this, all because some people in this world ain't never learned to be their age!"

"But gee whiz, Mister;" I couldn't help saying, "what if 6265 had run into you? I think you ought to be grateful for what we done'." "Grateful!" he snorted. "Listen, do you suppose we dint know this old junk-heap was loose? Ain't nobody ever told you about the telegraph yet? Why, we laid over twenty minutes in Sycamore waitin' for her to come along"-he blew the whistle for the Main Street crossing-"and all the while you and your juvenile friends taken her fishin'!"

When we got into the station the regular crew of 6265 were sitting on the rail waiting for us. They switched us in ahead of the cut of cars that

6265 had deserted, and the shack slammed them so hard it knocked my upper denture loose. The crew swarmed up in the cab with us.

"Why, darn if it ain't Doc!" says the engineer. "You know, Ed;" he says to the shack, "we chased this engine, Shorty and me, for fifteen blocks. Pretty near killed us. What you goin' to do with him? Take him on into the city and have him locked up?"

"There's a J.P. right here in Hazelwand;" I suggested. "I'm sure Bert Tabb can tend to you right away so you won't lose so much time. Besides, it won't cost the Company so much.'" "It's okay by me;" says the shack. "My day's ruind already. Are you-all comin' with us to the trial?"

The engineer fiddled with the gadgets on the dashboard and tested the air. "Why no, Ed;" he says, "we dint see it happen, Shorty and me. In fact, we don't know nothin' about it at all.'" Bert Tabb, the J. P., was at the telephone switchboard when we went in his house. He slipped off his head-set a minute to ask the shack what he wanted. "Oh yes;" says Bert. "So you got her back? Everyone in Hazelwand's been phonin' in to know. They'll be glad to hear you caught her. Now just set down whiles I tend this danged board until Columbine gets back from up street.'" For for five, ten minutes Bert was plugging in and pulling out with both hands and saying "Operator, operator;" in such a steady stream he almost lost his chewing tobacco. And the red and yellow pilot lights flickered in the panel and the little flipper-flappers kept falling open. It made me wish maybe some time Bert would learn me how to work it-only of course Columbine would never let him.

When Bert's woman came in to take over, we went in the back room [48. The California Quarterly J where he kept his law books. After he had sworn us in, Bert had us sit down again while he wrote something in his journal and studied how to begin. "Now Mr. Harmsworth;" he says to the shack. "Harmsworth's the name, ain't it? I wonder if you might be kin to the Harmsworths over to Amlin? But hardly, that's on the T. & O. C'" "Oh for cryin' out loud!" the shack groans. Bert didn't pay no attention. "If you'll just please tell your story of what happened in your own words, Mr. Harmsworth;" he says. And the shack did, what he knew about it.

"Was it your idea, Mr. Harmsworth;" Bert asks, "bringin' the kids home that way-on the cow-catcher of 6265?"

Mr. Harmsworth made a sound like he was fit to choke and looked hard at me. I shook my head. "On the cow-catcher?" the shack asks. "How come you know so much about that?"

"Why, ev'body along the line been calling in about it for the past hour. You know"-Bert took off his horn-rimmed glasses and leaned back in his chair-"the way 6265 got loose reminds me of a story I read once. Like to killed me laughin'. It was called-uh-- By a fella name of -uh-- Bless me, I wouldn't want to fergit. Boy, that was some story. Well, Doc"-he put his glasses on again-"now you tell me your side of it.'" So while the shack fanned himself with his gauntlets I told him the whole story, going back to my first personal acquaintance with old 6265-all the way back to the days when she was a regular on the short freight hauls including the time a swarm of my bees lit in her cab and they had to stop the train until I smoked 'em out.

"By the way, Doc;" Bert says, "how are those bees doin' I sold you?" I said they didn't get along any too well with the hives I already had. "Naturally;" Bert says. "They're Eyetalian, that's why. Sweetest-tempered bees there is, and they never swarm!'" "The heck they don't!" I says. "Why, they been swarmin' so fast over my orchard, I bet there ain't a tin-cupful left in some o' those boxes!"

Bert waved that notion away. "The trouble is there's too many new queens hatch out in this weather. The old queens don't like it and move out. Politics, you know. What you ought to do, Doc, is go in there and pinch the baby queens before they grow up, see?"

I told Bert I'd let him do that for me. "Me? I wouldn't know how. I just read about it in a book. Whatsa matter?" he asks the shack.

"Oh, don't mind me!'" Mister Harmsworth chewed hard on his tobacco. "I thought we was havin' a trial here, not a beekeepers' convention!'" Bert coughed and looked kind of sour. "What I'd like to know from you, Mr. Harmsworth, is how it happened?"

"How what happened?" "How 6265 come to get away, that's what!'" [49. Trial of 626 S]

"Oh, I thought maybe we was still talkin' about bees!'" And the shack went on to tell about the main steam valve needing packing.

"In other words,' Bert says, "it was negligence. Am I right?" I thought for a moment the shack was going to have a stroke. "Negligence?" he hollers. "Who the heck you think you're tryin' here, me or him?"

"Oh, I dint say you were negligent, o' course. No sirree. As a matter o' fac' we ain't tryin' anybody until I know what statute to try 'em under.' Bert swings around in his swivel-chair and looks at his shelf of law books. "The case don't come under the Dyer Act because 6265 ain't internal combustion. Dog if I do know where to look it up.' "Well, Mister" -the shack tried hard to control himself- "if you ast me, all you have to do is bind this fell a Doc over to the County Court. They'll decide pretty quick what statute he comes under. I would say this guy is guilty o' trespass, or tamperin' with railroad proputtty. There's a Federal law agin that, so he'd do time in Atlanta.' The shack looked at me in a way made me glad he wasn't the judge.

Bert straightens up in his chair severe-like. "I think, Mister Harmsworth, you better watch your language. I don't like it. I don't like it a bit. It comes pretty near bein' contempt o' court, and if there's one thing I never permit in this here office it's contempt o' court!"

The wind went out of the shack fast. He said Bert had him all wrong, he didn't mean it that way at all. That if he was goin' to catch the accomodation back to the city why he had to get outa there fast, that was all.

Bert said the Court accepted his apology in the spirit it was made in. "I just about got my mind made up;' he says, taking another chew of tobacco and handing the pack of Searchlight to me to hand to Mr. Harmsworth. "While we were talkin' here I guess I got it figgered out about right. The fac' o' negligence is admitted on the part o' the Company. If they hadn't been negligent 6265 would of not gone off by herself that way. If Doc hadn't of caught her she might ha' done irreparable harm. Seems to me the Company ought to reward Doc instidda tryin' to make a criminal outa him.' He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand and looked at me. Made me feel kinda good.

"So the Court judges and affirms that the Company, its officers and/or employees has been guilty o' gross negligence under the Collected Statutes, State of Ohio, Revised Code"-Bert swings around and takes a squint at his law books-"o' the year 1902. That the Company and/or its employees and/or officials, one and severally, has been guilty through

said negligence o' disturbin' the peace o' this community "by allowing to roam at large one steam locomotive, to wit, Number 6265. And the Court further decrees and affirms that in the light o' the defendant's previous good record prayer for judgment is suspended and the costs o' this trial is, and hereby are, remitted. - There's the accomodation whistlin' for Sycamore, Mr. Harmsworth. If you walk fast you can make it easY:' [50. The California Quarterly J

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JOURNAL PAGE 51 / SCAN PAGE 53

Death of the Architect

Don Gordon

To R.M.S.

The fruit fallen in the spring
Is a shock to the intricate motors
Of the tree, a loss unresolved
By the sweetness of summer and its suns.
The fruit falls ample as birth
In the natural autumn, an arc expected
Of a circle of rain and light.

Equal to the rock and the wild mustard,
Organic in another order than the laurel,
The house if listened to,
Beats with composure like a heart.

The cave was open to the eyes of birds,
The wall continued in gardens of light.
Counterpoint to the terrible city:
Star presence, the entrance of moons.

He engaged the dark puritan, shattering
The square rooms, the aspects of graves,
Admitting plants and children like pagans
To prove his laughter could defeat, endure.

Blinded by centuries of oppressive space,
The world like a creature of the lower sea
Swam into the beautiful clear lines and levels:
Meant for the great era that never began,
Blameless the structure if dwarfs moved in.

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JOURNAL PAGE 52 / SCAN PAGE 54

A Modern Miracle

Ray Smith

How tenaciously they keep
Places in the Small Reviews,
Beading with intellectual sweat
Those urgent havens of the muse.

Though syntactic strain may bend
They clutch unbroken loaves and fishes,
Insistent like St. Praxed's bishop
On their calculated niches.

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JOURNAL PAGE 52 / SCAN PAGE 54

All the Dead Poets

Thomas McGrath

How vainly men themselves bestir
For Bollingen or Pulitzer,
To raise, through ritual and rhyme
Some Lazarus of an earlier time:
The thought that died upon the page;
The attitude stiffened with its age;
The feeling, once appropriate,
Now, like honesty, out of date;
The elegant tone elegiac
That embalms the venom of a hack-
All the outmoded consciousness
A timid reason can assess:
His sin that in the soul's dark night
Like an ancient Cod's head gives off light-
All of this some will sing or say

I-Random Roderick

Here's one who sings (as he were wood)
The angst he has best understood:
What the Ash and Hickory
Feel toward Life and Poetry.
Of what the Willow should or shouldn't
He warbles his native wood-note prudent,

[52]

Proclaiming so everyone may know it
He's every ring the old oaken poet.
"Poems are made by fools like me
But only God can make a tree;"
Said Kilmer. Roderick proves the rule:
Too many trees may make a fool.
For there's a kind of Sallie law:

Such willowy whimsy is a bore.
 Still, better his light than heavy work-
 His agenbite's worse than his bark.

Earnest at his vat~c trade,
 He studies to be nobly mad;
 Courts furor poeticus

(So long as it is decorous)
 Thinking, when he has beguiled
 The critic-beasts, to mount the wild
 Pegasus of mantic verse-
 If only someone holds the horse.
 Yet to be "lyrically wild"

(And simple as a little child)
 Is not enough. The art of sinking
 Is not enough: he must be thinking-
 Thinking, thinking all the while

[53]

(As a history doctor will)
 Thinking, thinking all the day,
 While the cute ideas play,
 And when the hunting thoughts come home-
 Lo! they've bagged another poem!
 This philosophic poet's bold-
 Proudly demands his right to hold
 Such attitudes to church and state
 As died in 1848.
 Built from ruin and decay
 His dome of many-colored clay
 Arises-O Philosophy,
 Can this jakes thy mansion be?
 Wilt thou number in thy van
 This shamblin.g nineteenth century man?

Meanwhile our poet is romancing
 And sets the small ideas dancing:
 His poems would rather mean than be-

O Wouldsman, Wouldsman, spare that tree!

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JOURNAL PAGE 54 / SCAN PAGE 56

Winter 1950

Bruce Duff Hooton

Strips of snow, like bandages, bound
The clot of bricks that was Boston;
North and South the strips wound
As old men put their rubbers on.

Chimney pots screamed in the wind
That tumbled young skaters
In The Gardens and pinned
To statues yesterday's papers.

The gauze piled up in the streets;
The children banged their spades
And sniffing old maids
Snuggled in ruffles and pleats.

Wrapping paper and ribbon flecked
The alley ashcan, Christmas Chee{
Changed to propaganda. Clerks trekked
Back to work for another year.

The winter hammered its icy nails;
Life was normal, men were shaven,
Women held babies or mopping pails,
And no one saw the perched raven.

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JOURNAL PAGE 54 / SCAN PAGE 56

Prep-School Headmaster

George Abbe

The white spring, the flowefS on the air and the green
bring the flying perch of the wealthy,
the good people with purses long
as a patriot's banner, or a sharp handkerchief flown
from the pockets of the strong,
the big-house-happy.

[54]

Bringing their sons, the mothers arrive
in classical phalanx of cars,
dawn-dew lovely, wearing dresses
clean with money, and underneath, the taint
of hair their boys must never think of as related to kisses.

Ii

1, 1:

I

The headmaster's houses, his rooms spread on the tongs of luxury
place rugs wide for the polished heel, the massive frame
of worldly ones whose sons
skimming the clouds of family name,
will rise to Everest sublimity,
superior as the clerk's dream.

II,

I' I

1,

The clink of dishes someone hired will wash;
the Colonial hall fed by the star gleam of tradition;

the fan doorway, the full sweep of quaint New England tower;
 tennis courts, ball field
 curved in the lake-cool, linen altitude
 like anger soothed-all cluster at the lofty rail
 of his Niagara, his supported balustrades of spray.

The poker-game boys with their pink faces,
 the clown game played
 in classroom and chapel for devoutness,
 the semblance of learning-
 it can be arranged: these parents paid for it.
 The tennis balls will tick like indignant wrens;
 the golf course, built from their money, will roll its awning
 of sober cleanliness and gayly-cloistered fun
 over his too-bright days, cutting the sun
 from face and shoulders heavier lately
 with good meat and sleep.

I.

Ii

II

His boy-blue eyes twinkle at two students approaching;
 his brindle-bushy fatherliness of moustache moves,
 twitches at his boys:
 they are going to a ball game for good coaching
 on values and rewards the best people love
 and have understood for generations.
 His school will keep the toast to honest advancement
 brimming in the cup.

i

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JOURNAL PAGE 56 / SCAN PAGE 58

For Poets, In and Out of Universities

Don Geiger

Writers who're lucky learn to live.
James' characters survive his plots.
A certain Philistinism kept
Mann from being Aschenbach.

One I knew (whose alter ego
Right-thinking civil men abhor)
Rode joyously into an Age of Speed
On the hobbyhorse of metaphor.

What use is blocking Pegasus
When abstract wheels are down the road?
Wh at little gas a man contains
Should serve to ease the common load.

Or so they screamed from their Machine,
And swore they'd give him not a dime,
Until he turned his mount to leather
And hanged his dreams, ten at a time.

Fearing that failure to obey
Would starve him quickly out of speech,
He hied him to a college, for
Writers starve, but readers teach.

Inconspicuous consumption for
Children of the upper class,
He scared himself with tales of the trots
By Pegasus, that fancy ass.

His alter ego stared aghast
To see that coward run from life.
Shrugging off a last affection,
Alter turned his thoughts from flight.

He built a hut with solid walls;
He locked the door; he gave a curse.
He waited, watchful, til~ all slept-
Then shelled the rocking walls with verse!

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JOURNAL PAGE 57 / SCAN PAGE 59

Conversation: Liberal Arts Teacher and Poet

Don Geiger

He wondered if I didn't think
I should contribute
to the community chest,
one gift for all,
fifty-seven kinds of organization.

I asked how could I,
on my light substance?

He said
I don't know
I just present the problems
I don't solve them.

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JOURNAL PAGE 57 / SCAN PAGE 59

Unorthodox Warfare

W. S. Allen

In my dream the unwilling
dinosaur
was pushed out the door
of the C-82
He fell
and burst
somewhere downtown
The lovable populace
of our enemy's city
was disconcerted

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Poem

Emile Snyder

Over Santa Monica Pier, one Sunday by cold sea,
a white gull bashed a wing in the steel cordage
of a telegraph pole. Its feathers ripped, but
held in the thorns of the steel, the gull shook
its death in the salted skies.
At first, fishermen and bathers attended at the
foot of the pole, resented the gyrations of the
bird, nailed.

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It was noisy: other gulls flocked about and
moaned.

Then the gull is left alone

seaward the fat-breasted pelicans
unmindful, dive for their food.
a warmless sun hits the cordage
where the gull is still.

the death of things
too odd for words,
gulls
feathers of noon
in the whale sea,
fat-breasted pelicans
dive at the waves
flesh in the green shroud,
the death of things.

then the sudden distinction

of a clear moment.
this gull is caught
in our eyes

spiked on the flight
thorned on the steel;
the wind is red
in the wound of noon.

if it would leave its death alone!

the sun,
always punctual,
impartial,
mounts
the steel stem
of its rose
black,
and burning

a rebellious leaf screens the light.

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Second Printing

II:

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From the 1855 Preface

Walt Whitman

1, II ll 1r On July 4th of this year the 100th anniversary of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* will be celebrated throughout the world. In commemoration of this milestone in the history of American letters we present an abbreviation of Whitman's original preface to his masterpiece. As an ironical footnote, let it be remembered that no publisher would touch *Leaves of Grass*, and that Whitman was forced to bring it out at his own expense.

I'

LE GENIUS of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors, or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors-but always most in the common people, south, north, west, east, in all its States, through all its mighty amplitude. The largeness of the nation, however, were monstrous without a corresponding largeness and generosity of the spirit of the citizen. Not swarming states, nor streets and steamships, nor prosperous business, nor farms, nor capital, nor learning, may suffice for the ideal of man -nor suffice the poet.... The pride of the United States leaves the wealth and finesse of the cities, and all returns of commerce and agriculture, and all the magnitude of geography or shows of exterior victory, to enjoy the sight and realization of full-sized men, or one full-sized man unconquerable or simple....

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American poets are to enclose old and new, for America is the race of races.... Here the theme is creative, and has vista.... The land and sea, the animals, fishes and birds, the sky of heaven and the orbs, the forests, mountains and rivers, are not small themes-but folks expect of the poet to indicate more than the beauty and dignity which always attach to dumb real objects-they expect him to indicate the path between reality and their souls....

The fluency and ornaments of the finest poems or music or orations or recitations are not independent but dependent. All beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain. If the greatnesses are in conjunction in a

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man or woman, it is enough-the fact will prevail through the universe; but the gaggery and guilt of a million years will not prevail. Who troubles himself about his ornaments or fluency is lost. This is what you shall do Love the earth and sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to every one that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown, or to any man or number of men-go freely with powerful uneducated persons, and with the young, and with the mothers of families-re-examine all that you have been told in school or church or in any book, and dismiss whatever insults your own soul; and your very flesh shall be a great poem, and have the richest fluency, not only in its words, but in the silent lines of its lips and face, and between the lashes of your eyes, and in every motion and joint of your body....

In the make of the great masters the idea of political liberty is indispensable. Liberty takes the adherence of heroes wherever man and woman exist-but never takes any adherence or welcome from the rest more than from poets. They are the voice and exposition of liberty. They out of ages are worthy the grand idea-to them it is confided, and they must sustain it. Nothing has precedence of it, and nothing can warp or degrade it.

I'

As the attributes of the poets of the kosmos concentrate in the real body, and in the pleasure of things, they possess the superiority of genuineness over all fiction and romance.... That which distorts honest shapes, or which creates unearthly beings or places or contingencies, is a nuisance and revolt. Of the human form especially, it is so great it must never be made ridiculous....

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Great genius and the people of these States must never be demean'd to romances. As soon as histories are properly told, no more need of romances....

The direct trial of him who would be the greatest poet is today. If he does not flood himself with the immediate age as with vast oceanic tides-if he be not himself the age transfigured... let him merge in the general run, and wait his development.

Still the final test of poems, or any character or work, remains. The prescient poet projects himself centuries ahead, and judges performer or performance after the changes of time.... Is he beloved long and long after he is buried? Does the young man think often of him? and the young woman think often of him? and do the middle-aged and the old think of him?

A great poem is for ages and ages in common, and for all degrees and complexions, and all departments and sects, and for a woman as much as a man, and a man as much as a woman. A great poem is no finish to a man or woman, but rather a beginning. Has any one fancied he could sit at last under some due authority, and rest satisfied with explanations, and realize, and be content and full? To no such terminus does the greatest poet bring-he brings neither cessation nor shelter'd fatness and ease. The touch of him, like Nature, tells in action. Whom he takes he takes with firm grasp into live regions previously unattain'd-thenceforward is no rest-they see the space and ineffable sheen that turn the old spots and lights into dead vacuums. Now there shall be a man cohered out of tumult and chaos-the elder encourages the younger and shows him how-they two shall launch off fearlessly together

till the new world fits an orbit for itself, and looks unabash' d on the lesser orbits of the stars, and sweeps through the ceaseless rings, and shall never be quiet again....

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j l li No great literature, nor any style of behavior or oratory, or social intercourse or household arrangements, or public institutions, or the treatment by bosses of employ' d people, nor executive detail, or detail of the army or navy, nor spirit of legislation or courts, or police or tuition or architecture, or songs or amusements, can long elude the jealous and passionate instinct of American standards. Whether or no the sign appears from the mouths of

II

[6r. From the 1855 Preface] the people, it throbs a live interrogation in every freeman's and freewoman's heart, after that which passes by, or this built to remain. Is it uniform with my country? Are its disposals without ignominious distinctions? Is it for the ever-growing communes of brothers and lovers, large, well united, proud, beyond the old models, generous beyond all models? Is it something grown fresh out of the fields, or drawn from the sea for use to me to-day here? I know that what answers for me, an American, in Texas, Ohio, Canada, must answer for any individual or nation that serves for a part of my materials. Does this answer? Is it for the nursing of the young of the republic? Does it solve readily with the sweet milk of the nipples of the breasts of the Mother of Many Children?

America prepares with composure and good-will for the visitors that have sent word. It is not intellect that is to be their warrant and welcome. The talented, the artist, the ingenious, the editor, the statesman, the erudite, are not unappreciated—they fall in their place and do their work. The soul of the nation also does its work. It rejects none, it permits all. Only toward the like of itself will it advance half-way. An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation. The soul of the largest and wealthiest and proudest nation may well go half-way to meet that of its poets.

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