

## LOST SUMMER

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her Daddy, who was away most of the day, or friends everytime she wanted to go some place before. It was funny, but now that she had her license, there was always some boy with a car who would come to take her anywhere she wanted.

Victor spent the better part of the afternoon inside because of a thunderstorm. It grew dark suddenly. Clouds unbelievably big and black appeared from nowhere, bringing the wind and rain with them. Thunder vibrated in his ears, lightning flashed in front of his eyes as he reclined on the floor reading comic books, completely, or almost, unconcerned with the storm outside.

When things grew silent, he looked up from his reading. The rain had stopped, and in the west the sun was peeling the black clouds off the sky. It would be pretty again in no time.

The grass is soaked and there will be a lot of fireflies out this evening, Victor thought. They would swarm in the misty dampness below his house. It was times like these, many summers ago, that he and Laurie would get mayonnaise jars and scoop them up as they fluttered in the night.

He would ask her about it that evening.

Supper was over and the sun began its downward path as Victor walked down the street to Laurie's house. Steam rose from the pavement. His feet splashed in the little warm pools of water that had gathered.

He saw the car sitting in the driveway and knew it did not belong to the Wilkins!

Before he had even finished wiping his feet on the door mat, the front door opened. A boy he had never seen before, with a deep tan and long black hair slicked in place, dressed in a suit and tie, invited him in.

"How're you gettin' along sonny?" the boy asked, sitting down and picking up a newspaper.

"OK" he muttered under his breath. It did not really matter because the boy was not listening. Victor stood with his bare feet sunk in the living room carpet, looking about him, smelling the smells of a recently prepared supper.

"Hello, Vic." His head popped up. It was Laurie. She entered the room in a pink dress that shook with a crispness as the trees by the creek bank. Her auburn hair was shiny, her lips soft and pink, and her eyes flashed like the light of a thousand fireflies.

The boy jumped to his feet. Victor stayed where he was. He watched her as she smiled at the boy and they said things to each other. They walked towards the door, stopping beside him.

"Mother says you've been after me all day, Vic. I've been so busy it's just pitiful." She bent over. "What is it

## CLASSROOM CLIPPINGS

Coach Harris—OK, let's fall in.

Mr. Andrews—This test is so easy I'm ashamed of it.

Mr. Terrell — Do you recall where we stopped last time?

Mrs. Hill—Whaaat? Let's play that again.

Mr. Tom Harris—That GREAT! That's just GREAT!

Mrs. Gidney—Now while we're singing this you keep your eyes right on me.

Mr. Stacy—As a man sows, so shall he reap. Some of us are going to reap these grades one of these days, that right?

Mr. Hill—It still isn't late to enter the talent show.

Mrs. Hamrick — Now relative to your quality point ratio.

Miss Jones—Well now, this Biblical character is just about the greatest person who ever lived.

you wanted, Vic?"

The smell of her, the dress, the hair, her eyes, she seemed to be someone else, someone he did not know. He was embarrassed.

"Nothin."

"This is Paul Taylor, Vic."

"We've already met," the boy said, straightening his tie and smiling at her. They smiled at each other continually.

"Well, we've got to run now. Listen, come and see me tomorrow sometime, Vic. Bye."

They left. He did not speak.

Laurie's mother came in and picked up the newspaper.

"It sure is hot, isn't it? I wish I could spend a whole summer at the beach, don't you Vic?"

"Yes ma'am."

"There's a good program on TV tonight. Want to stay and watch it with me?"

He glanced out the front door into the still twilight and saw an early firefly wink at him, beckoning.

"No. I gotta go," said Victor.