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One of our Mirror subscribers, whose name we dare not mention, told us this story on his wife. If you're familiar with that grand old institution, the family reunion, you won't doubt its authenticity.

Year after year, displaying the shrewdness that females are known for, she would cook a big ham, and carry it whole to her clan's gathering. On each occasion she placed it on the table, without a carving knife.

Folks eyed the ham, and drooled, but no one wanted to be so forward as to round up a knife, and cut the first slice. For one thing, there was plenty of everything else spread out, and the ham really wasn't needed.

Always it was the same, and when the reunion came to an end, the meal part of it that is, the ham bringer wrapped up her choice delicacy, still untouched, to fetch it back home for her immediate family's enjoyment.

She might be doing it right on, but for a slip of the tongue. In an unguarded moment, she mentioned the strategy to one of her sisters. If we remember rightly, she has six or seven of them.

The enlightened sister had little to say about the matter at the time. She saved her wordage for the other sisters, and rest assured she told them plenty. The next reunion, held in Lenoir County, was a day of reckoning.

Once again, when the conniving ham cooker, who happens to live in New Bern, arrived, she was toting you know what. But this time, the assembled sisters quickly pounced on her offering.

In fact, one of the sisters even took the bone home with her. It happened like that the next reunion too, and the next. After that, there were no more hams spread out. That's what can, and did happen at a family reunion.

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New Bern's parents and first grade teachers can appreciate this incident. When asked what she did at her first day of school, a little girl told her dad, "I did what all the other children did."

"That's nice," the father beamed proudly, "and what was it that you all did." Her answer was, "We cried." Maybe there aren't as many moppets weeping these days, thanks to kindergartens, but agony still crops up.

We live in a world where speed appears to be our prime objective. In such an environment, those who learn to be fast readers are supposed to have a decided edge over those who peruse words at a more leisurely pace.

To the student cramming for exams, or the businessman thumbing through incoming letters, rapid reading, if done accurately, does have its advantages. If you're reading for pleasure, however, why engage in a rat race?

Rushing through a good book, fiction or non-fiction, is as senseless as cramming a well prepared meal in a few frantic



**GLOOM CHASER**—Happiness is Kathryn Lynn Wall, whose father, Mitchell Wall, serves with the Strategic Air Command in Germany. She was born there nine months ago, but now lives in Virginia. Her mother is Jo Lynn Wall, her grandmother, Georgia Lynn Sledge,

and her great-grandmother, Iva Lynn Rawls down at the Craven County Courthouse. The youngster has been visiting in New Bern this week, and to our way of thinking it would be nice if she decided to stay here for keeps.