

Comes The Spring

When the days become warm enough for me to be comfortable with only a light-weight coat over a skirt and sweater, and a robin can be seen here and there on the yet lifeless grass or upon a skeleton limb of an apple tree, I want to return southward to meet the oncoming springtime in the rolling farm and forested land of Alabama.

I want to arise early with the farmer as he goes out upon the field in the chilly morning, that is soon to be warmed by the sun rising above the still pines in the east, and to live the day with him. As the plow digs deep into the soil, I see the gray cover crop soon rolled beneath the rich, chocolate brown earth, enriching it for the planting that is to follow. Into the fresh, cool air the hardy green oats that have stood still during the cold winter stretch their heads upward in the adjoining field. The odor of smoke comes to me from the burning sage along the fence row.

The schoolboy of nine years rushes off the rumbling, dusty school bus, breathless, excited at having seen the plows and their teams moving to and fro in the field as he had passed by. With a huge piece of gingerbread in his hand, the lad is seen running across the newly turned soil with his brown bird pup chasing at his heels, leaping up now and then for a crumb. He sits down and removes his dirt-filled shoes. As the plow comes nearer, he is seen trotting along behind, begging to be allowed to take over the plow; for he has not yet learned what it means to trudge all day up and down the seemingly endless rows with the sun overhead burning the very blood within the body. I see him, his head hardly reaching above the plow handles and his little white, yet tender, feet bouncing up and down in the furrow as he tries desperately to keep up with the fast moving team. I want to joke with the old Negro woman as I help her hang the wet,

flapping clothes upon the line. I want to sit on the stool in the big kitchen along with the colored hands as they hungrily eat, that I may enjoy again their conversations, as I did in my childhood.

When the cool night comes, I imagine myself back again in my old, high-ceiling bedroom with my bed pulled near the south window and my elbows upon the window



sill. The moonlight reflected from the windows of the old, abandoned church seems, at first, to come from dim lamps within the building; and the tombs stand white and noble in the community cemetery just beyond. I can hear the sound of a feed bucket being licked by a cow that had been reluctant to be driven in from the increasingly green pastures. The horse is bumping around in his narrow stall. The three never-sleeping geese stroll across the lawn in the moonlight. There in the early-blossomed red-bud tree outside my window a mocking bird sings a night song to his mate; and from the creek, whose moss-filled waters, flowing cold and fresh from the health-giving sulphur spring, cut a crystal, curving path through the green carpet of the pasture and then quickly hide within the wooded areas, I hear

By

Mamie Lou McCrory

the low moaning of the old bullfrogs joined by younger voices. The fragrance of the purple petunia blossoms in the window box beneath my window fills the air, and I begin falling sleepily, peacefully from my elbows to be lost in dreams that are real.

A Summer's Morn

The morning's twilight reigned about me;
Slowly the darkness vanished in the lighted air.
Silent awe filled the growing country side;
Then, the mockingbird vocalized the morning.
The patient cattle drank in the cooling breeze,
Ere a scorching sun sent its rays across the trees.
A late rising cock intruded its melodious song
Into a savory early summer's morning.
The air now became filled with sounds of an awakening world:
The cattle were lowing, the dogs barking,
A tractor awoke, a farmer boy whistled.
An energetic but peaceful attitude prevailed
As eternal nature smiled in all greatness.

—By Don Jackson.