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THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE QUARTERLY

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"SNOWS"

NEW HAMPSHIRE snows come very early in the fall and stubbornly remain far into the spring. Settling down on the hills and fields they make small worlds of country villages; lonely strongholds of solitary farm-houses, and spread a vast, white silence over all. Winter is a numbing time of year. It brings out in the farmer all the doggedness, the silent grit that his nearness to the soil has developed in him. Loneliness, pressing in, stifling, during the long silent nights, broken only by the staccato call of the fox, the piteous moan of the wild-cat, dries up in some the human spring of friendship, chokes the spontaneity. Yet it brings to others a sense of peace, strangely calming, a feeling of nearness to the God of vastness.

It was after just such a winter as this, when the first thawing snow awakened the brooks to song again, and the first restless stirring of nature was felt throughout the hills and fields, that life seemed to arouse itself in a dilapidated, old farm house. A rambling, friendly old house it seemed, sheltered by tall, majestic pines, still carrying their snow burdens, and sung to by a mountain stream which wound its way between house and barn. Windows were being raised, doors were opened, cool, sweet air found its way into rooms long closed. An attempt at house-cleaning was going on—if rooms can be said to be house-cleaned when year after year things too good to be thrown away, things that might prove useful sometime were piled in corners, beneath beds, and reverently dusted, but never moved. This collecting, this hoarding was the one passion of Mrs. Hunt's life, her one carrying to excess of anything. As she stood in the small bed-room beneath the eaves she shook her head rather dubiously. During the four years that the room had been vacant it had served as a storehouse for magazines, boxes, spools, and now Elsie was coming home. With a sudden flaming of mother love she stopped and gathered the debris, placing it all in a large basket. It must burn, there was no conceivable place for it, and she smiled ruefully, resting a moment by the small window. The sun-light, streaming in, brightened the plastered wall, unadorned save by a few tattered magazine pictures of people, of cities. It disclosed a narrow iron bed, a white washstand, and a cracked mirror. Mrs. Hunt, small, with something of the dryness and crackle of brown leaves, fitted well into the background. Her small, bright eyes had in them the courage that comes from lack of understanding, from narrowness, from self-complacency. Winter and spring found her unchanged—dressed in dark brown woolen stuffs—busy always, habitually silent. Yet steadfastly kind to husband and son, to the cows and the chickens.

Below in the yard came the sound of wheels, of horses' hoofs, then a man's voice calling, deep, kindly,

"Hetty, be you coming down? It's high time I was off."

"No," she called down to him, her voice crisp, decisive, "I ain't time. Tell Ara to stay. I want he should help me."

The buggy drove off. Mrs. Hunt watched it, gazing abstractedly at the tall, gaunt man in it, whose gnarled, work-hardened hands shook with expectation as he played with the reins upon the horse's back, and whose voice rose in an uncertain tune as he lost the farm to view.

Two hours later, the work done, mother and son sat on the worn steps, waiting. Mrs. Hunt bundled in many shawls, Ara in an antique mackinaw and blue scarf that closely matched the intense blue of his eyes. They were unusual eyes, containing a depth suggestive of wistfulness, of dreams, strangely mild as the most timid of animals. Yet, the line of the jaw was rugged, determined, the mouth was firm. It was only the eyes and the dark, unruly hair that curled low on his temples that gave him the elfin, wistful look. He seemed a part of the night, a part of the woods, as he sat there, gazing off into the distance that the twilight magnified.

"Ma," he ventured, breaking the heavy, brooding silence, "Ain't it going to be fine to have her home agin?"

"I don know," Mrs. Hunt replied laconically, lapsing into silence abruptly.

A mile away a horse and buggy had turned in off the main road, and was slowly making its way along the narrow, snowy lane. A young girl with happy eyes was drinking in the snow-perfumed air, the purple twilight, the stillness. Suddenly she moved closer to the man at her sideas the pines creaked and an owl's call sounded from the hills.

"It's good to be home, Pa, to the woods, to you, but it's strange, it's so quiet after all the noise and lights, the voices—Have I changed, Pa?"

The bobbed, red hair, the piquant, slightly freckled face, the childish, turned-up nose, the eager, petulant mouth, and the tiny wrinkle of irritation between her eyes, caused a sudden chill in the heart of the father.

"Do you think you'll take to teachin' here, child?" he said soberly. "Remember, it ain't as gay as larnin' to teach, or being a governess in the summer—and it's lonely."

"I had to come home, Pa, like I promised, and I hope"—she broke off, bit her lip, then—"There's the house—just the same, same old trees and brook."

Then in silence they drove into the yard, the man doubting, puzzled, the girl a trifle too gay and spirited. Shabby though her clothes were, she seemed a bright flame, a song in the silence. Calmly, yet affectionately, Mrs. Hunt kissed her, and led her at once to the attic room. Ara stood mutely, dumbly by, the dawn of a great reverence in his eyes.

That night they sat in the kitchen after the supper was cleared away. Elsie chattered feverishly of her winters of study, of how much she learned, of all her friends, of the city. When she stopped, the silence seemed to settle down, a still, heavy silence that frightened her. They asked few questions. The mother because silence was a part of her, the father because his heart was anxious, the boy because he worshipped. It was with a sense of relief, then, that Elsie climbed the narrow, once-familiar stair-case, lighted by a small oil lamp, to the cold, dark room. She walked to the window, but there was nothing to see, save blackness, far stretching, noiseless blackness, miles of it, years of it waiting ahead.

The days of early spring passed swiftly. Adjustment comes easily to the young, and so, after a time Elsie seemed contented, almost happy. Each day she walked to the school house, and the cool, morning breeze soothed the rebellion in her heart. She almost learned to love the tall, sentinel pines that guarded the lonely path, the

tiny, joyous birds, the thousand manifestations of beauty, but never quite. The loneliness, the stillness, the carelessness of living, the longing for people, lights, was too much a part of her. At times she almost hated the magic, silvery lovesong of the thrush, the music of the poplars by the brook. They were all part of her imprisonment. In the evenings she walked, usually alone, but sometimes with Ara, back into the hills, frightened, yet better able to control the tide of resentment that threatened to overcome her in the house. Lights, laughters, voices, she could feel them call to her through the mystery of night.

One night on her return she seated herself by her father. Realizing that his sombre, thoughtful eyes were fixed on her, she asked in a muffled tone, striving to disguise the blind fury arising within her.

"How can you sit here, Pa, night after night? Don't you ever do anything but think and stare?"

It was a night in the middle of July, a warm, restful night after the burning heat of the day. The trees, outlined against the purple-black heavens; the multitude of stars; the tiny, happy chirping of the crickets, made a world almost perishable in its loveliness. Then, as if to intensify the fragility, the delicacy of beauty, a whip-poor-will called from the hills.

"I can't tell you, Elsie. If you ain't the natural love for it, it's nothin' you can be taught. It's peace to me to set here, but it's somethin' more'n that. I love it. It's me, I guess. Can't you see it's always there for you, waitin', peaceful? Seems like it's God. Anyhow, it's near as I'll ever be to God. Even as a mite of a child you didn't love it like Ara. You played in the brook, but you never heard it sing." Then a tinge of sadness crept into his voice. "If it weren't for your ma's needin' you, you could go back, but can't you larn to like it, Girl?"

The spring term was soon over, and the drudgery of house work began for Elsie, an endless round of work. The days of contact brought the mother and daughter no closer together. Mrs. Hunt was kind, as always, but there was nothing maternal in her weather beaten face, or work hardened arms. Elsie made no effort to talk now—it didn't seem to matter any longer. In the warm twilight she would walk with Ara to some neighboring farm, but these calls were never happy ones. The people seemed dull, unresponsive, narrow to Elsie, and she loathed and pitied them. One night they walked at sunset by the edge of Mist Lake. The glow of the waters, reflecting the glory of the sky, the whisper of the wind, and all the intangible, breathless loveliness of night, caused the boy to stop.

"Smell it all, Elsie? Gee, but it's fine to see and breathe tonight."

The girl's face was expressionless. "Don't you like it, Elsie?" he asked wonderingly.

And Elsie answered slowly, truthfuly, her eyes on the hill that sloped to the lake.

"I hate it. It frightens me. It's too big, too vast. I want people, noise, voices. When I wake up in the morning, what is there? Just myself to be with, just work to be done. I want to live."

They were silent, boy and girl, each filled with intense wonder, longings. Then she spoke again.

"It's so hateful, Ara, Ma selling eggs and vegetables to summer folks, living like this. Sometimes I want to die. At night, when it's so deathly still, I'm not big enough to know how to love it," she finished brokenly, then left him, hurrying along the bank of the darkening lake.

He had scarcely heard her last words, not clearly enough to understand them. For a space he thought of her as a wind-flower, exposed to the harsh rays of the sun, taken from the shelter of the pines and birches. Then an intense pity and love filled his heart, and a curious sense of dissatisfaction seized him. The night seemed black, desolate. He saw only that she did not love it—not why.

The summer waned. The first gold and red of autumn gilded the world. It was morning, a week before the opening of the country school. Mrs. Hunt broke the usual silence of dishwashing.

"I want you should put on the flowered crepe tonight, Elsie. Mrs. Stevens and Sam are callin'."

Indignation lit up the girl's eyes.

"I'll not be here," she said sullenly.

"He's a likely boy," Mrs. Hunt went on, disregarding Elsie's reply. "Some day you'll marry, and you'd do lots worse."

The indignation flamed red-hot now.

"I'll not marry a farmer, Ma. I'll not live and drudge as you have. I'd die sooner. I hate it. Can't you understand?"

There was no understanding in Mrs. Hunt's bright eyes. Something almost akin to hate welled up in the girl's heart. That night, in the loneliness of the attic room, she sobbed weakly, brokenly, staring out into the blackness. The stillness closed in about her, smothering, stifling. Life, freedom, laughter, lights were just beyond.

Morning dawned, warm and sultry, like mid-summer. The air grew more oppressive as the day lengthened. Banks of clouds piled up upon the hills. Mr. Hunt was in the fields; Mrs. Hunt in a distant village; Ara was fishing. From the back door stole a small figure, somewhat shabbily dressed, but with eyes that danced happily, with hair that flamed defiantly. A bag was in her hand. The cloud banks grew darker, and from the distance came the ominous rumble of thunder. The leaves stirred restlessly, as if danced upon by a thousand tiny feet. It suited the girl's mood, this storm, and she hurried on through the faint fall of rain, accompanied by the muttering of the thunder, the flash of the lightning.

* * * * * *

A little more than a year passed, but years bring little difference to the hills and to farm houses. Time seems to age slowly in the country. It is the tragic heartache that brings weariness to the soul and lines to the face.

Mr. Hunt sat in the kitchen, a trifle more gaunt and stooped of shoulders, his eyes seemed darkened. Mrs. Hunt stood near him. Her hardness was intensified; her lips were thinner, more self-righteous. She spoke in the same crisp tones as always.

"Tain't no use, Abe, she's thrown away the money we've sent. She left us; she'll find no shelter here now. She's picked her life. Let her stick to it."

"Ma," broke in a voice, startled, stunned, "Ma, ya can't mean that." Ara's eyes burned with a fanatical light. The year had brought lines of discontent to the once smooth brow, restlessness to the intense blue eyes. The old adoration for Elsie blazed up in him anew. Her weakness, her limitations were lost to him. He saw her only as a flower in the hot sun, a flaming color against the drabness of his life.

Silence hung heavily in the close room after his broken words. At last Mr. Hunt tore the letter he had been clutching in nervous hands to bits, and watched them burn. Then he spoke stolidly, yet with a longing scarcely disguised.

"Yer ma is right, Ara, she has no claim on us now."

Ara rose, a slender, defiant figure.

"You're hard, both of you are, hard as granite. It's the loneliness she hated that has made you so, an' you'll regret it. You'll be sorry."

His voice trailed off. Neither the man nor the woman looked at him. Their eyes were on the fire. After a few moments of oppressive, ominous stillness, the boy left the room, glancing back only once.

It was midnight, cold, still, lonely—a figure stole out of the house. Against the white of the snow the slender figure was silhouetted—it gleamed darkly. In one hand was clutched a gun, in the other a small bundle. The clouds parting for an instant, permitted the moon to shine through. It lit up the face of the boy, kindled again the burning light in the intense blue eyes, the determination and doggedness in the line of his chin. Yet, above all did it etch the lines of discontent, of restlessness. In the blackness, the smothering, lonely blackness of woods, he disappeared.

New Hampshire snows come very early in the fall, and remain far into the spring. They bring a loneliness that hardens the heart, dulls the soul. Yet, to a few they bring peace—an acceptance of life—a nearness to the God of vastness.

AS THE STARS MOVE ON

Mother—Civilization.

Son—The Spirit of the Present.

Enter, talking, the mother and son, into a garden, lit with moonlight and shadowed by mountains.

Son: Nay my mother, I cannot stay.
I love thee more than e'er I knew
A mortal being loved, and yet
There lodges in my breast a flame
Not even thou cans't quench!

Mother: My son!
My son, with pain thou dost not dream
I bare thee, I nurtured thee in pain.
I loved thee, and I love thee now.

Son: Stronger than adamant, the bonds
Which bind me to thee, mother,
Forged and tempered on the anvil
Of ten thousand human years,
Wrought with all pain that man
Has suffered since the world became,
Moulded by the greatest joys he knows,
Yet fragile as a spider's web,
That jewelled in the dawn, is crushed
And broken with a scythe.

Mother: Oh, son!
The dew upon the spider's web
Shall not be shaken off. My love
Will keep its beauty, will hide it
From the searching fingers of the sun.

Son: Oh, truly spoken, mother, true,
It is thy son that shall destroy

That which thou has't builded up,
'Tis he shall raze the battlements
That thou did'st rear long since, with hands
That felt the strength thou gavest them,
And eyes that thought their vision fixed
And guided by the stars. 'Tis he—
'Tis he, and yet he loves thee still—
But the firmament is shaken,
And the stars are shining far away,
He must up and through the storm clouds,
Though he wander ever onward,
And ever leave thee lonely here.

Mother: Son, my beloved son—the last,
Last and only one left to me—
Must thou press onward to the sky,
And leave me here to perish?

Son: Yea,
Thy son is driven by a force
That, cruel, tears him from the one
Who lately gave him birth. Stay! Stay!
I cannot stay lest thou or I
Shoulds't die. But sorrow not, my mother,
For the walls thou has't builded
With the truth to guide thy fingers
Shall not perish, though I journey
Far and far away.—See, a star
Falls jagged through the sky—'tis that
Which I must follow—must follow,
Though it lead beyond the mountains,
And beyond the bourn of man.

The mother falls on her knees with outstretched, pleading arms, as he walks slowly away.

O strange and awful mystery of life
And horrible twin mystery of death,
If I could penetrate thy secret place,
And only once could feel the quick'ning breath
Of soul beyond—why then, I would not care,
Though I saw sorrow stalking everywhere.
If I could see a light shining afar,
I would not mind the battle or the scar.
I'd know that each is but a stepping stone
To bring the soul more surely to its own.

LUNCHEON SETS

I WANDERED slowly down the road, licking my ice cream cone—pushing the cream down inside with my tongue. Ahead of me, a swarm of pale yellow butterflies rose in a flutter as I approached. I gazed at them absently. Such dainty, happy things! Nothing to do but play about—not even picking. I sighed—in all the pleasures of the country, picking berries was not included. "When I get big," I pondered, taking one more lick of cold goodness, "when I get big, and Charles gives me that net he promised, I'll catch all those butterflies. I'll keep them an hour or a day, maybe, and then—I'll let them out, and they'll be so surprised and pleased!"

My thoughts were interrupted by a trickle of chocolate ice cream running down my dress. The bottom of the cone had sagged through! But I was master of the ice cream trade. Carefully I lifted the cone so the cream could trickle into my mouth as I sucked. I was a whirlpool, I pretended, sucking down men from the bottom of a ship—thrilling! When all the men had gone down to their death, and the ship itself was smashed between the mighty jaws of the monster whirlpool, I gazed ruefully at the brown line still trickling down my dress. What would Aunt Alice say!

It was a pretty dress, light pink, and high waisted, with a short, full skirt and a black bow with streamers on the shoulder. I loved streamers. "When I get big," I mused again, "My children shall have streamers on every dress, and long ones, reaching to their hems; on every hat."

I walked on, handkerchiefing the brown spot and scuffing my square-toed shoes in the dust as I went. Suddenly I stopped short—there were the berriers picking raspberries. "If I didn't ever see them," I argued, "I wouldn't need go help," so I walked far over on the right, my eyes on the leaves overhead.

"Bird hunting," someone said, "funny how that child has taken a fancy to them."

I grinned at my clever little ruse, and skipped nonchalantly on. It is fun to go skipping down a country road trying to make each foot land on a little island of grass.

Home again. I unlocked the gate with my toe—it was a part of the game. The baby toddled down the path. "Wow-wow, Babba," she said, holding up her tiny fist for me to smell her rose. "Wide-wide? au wight?"

"Nope, can't ride—it's time for your bath." The rosebud mouth smiled, the serious brown eyes danced, a bath was better than a ride any day. Sweet youngster. Just then Aunt Alice appeared in the doorway. "Come Phyllis," she called, "bath ready. Barbara, why do you insist upon wearing that old pink dress? Why, you must have had it back in high school! But it's good linen," she added, "it would make a very attractive luncheon set, something a little different, if you designed it well." I sighed wearily. There was no use pretending. I wasn't the little girl I thought I was all the way home, but just a grown up one, about to make my beloved high waisted pink dress into a luncheon set! What a shame!

WINTER'S COMIN'

Winter's comin'!
Jus' this mornin' when the sleepy sun was peepin'
Thru the mist, and all the tired world was sleepin',
Sudden-like old Father Winter comes a-creepin',
Comes a-crawlin' and a-creepin' thru the mist.

He's a-comin'!
Cause I heard him tellin' Mr. Wind to hurry

Thru the purple-stilly night, and bring a flurry
Of his chilly little snowflakes, that make merry
As they flutter and they scurry thru the mist.

Sure he's comin'!
Why, the autumn leaves all yellow-red are fallin—
They've been waitin' 'till they'd hear Dame Nature callin';
Now it's time that Father Winter comes a-crawlin',
Comes a-creepin' and a-crawlin' thru the mist.

A DANCE

SHE was going to a dance. Would it be a good one? She certainly hoped so, for she hated to be bored. And she certainly hoped, too, that there would be plenty of stags, for her man wasn't a remarkable dancer. And, besides, she'd seen him all day. Her dress looked rather nice, she thought, and just extreme enough to cause a second look. If she could only get that second look, she knew she'd be cut in on. She felt just like dancing—yes, she was going to have a wonderful time. She was going to a dance.

She was going to a dance. Would it be a nice one? She certainly hoped so, for she was rather worried about it. She certainly hoped, too, that there wouldn't be too many stags; they were always hard to handle. She hoped the boys weren't going to think she was too much of a prig. She wanted to see that things were alright, but she wanted to appear as a "good sport" to Dick's friends. They were all nice boys, she knew, but they seemed to get so sort of excited at their dances. And she'd never seen a fraternity dance before. Well she did hope they'd be nice to her, even if she was just "a necessary chaperone."

With a crash of cymbals, the boom, boom of drums and the shriek of the saxaphone, the dance began. Dim lights, swaying couples, and sobbing music. Faster, slower, whirling, and then just crawling. Girls held tightly, flowers crushed, eyes saying many things—and in the darkest corners, lips saying many more things. And always near, ready to spring, was a solid line of black coats and white shirt fronts. Worried, intent faces and whispered remarks. "Is she any good?" "Who's she with?" "Will you cut on me?" "Oh! is that the girl!" These stags had the cares of the world on their shoulders, some had the cares of the revenue officers warming the cockles of their hearts—and they were there in large numbers. They darted out, took a few steps, and were back in line. "Pretty good!" "Sure she's Smith—tell 'em a mile away." Then out again. "Golly, she's a knockout—wonder if she'd 'late date.'" And then out again.

And so it went through the night—on into the morning. More noise, more pushing, dancing getting more reckless. Everybody happy—yes, they all appeared that way. And the chaperones sitting in the corner, propping their eyes open, being talked to by dutiful looking couples. Being waited on by attentive youths, who dashed off at the first opportune moment. But finally, with the slow, long, drawn-out strains of "Home Sweet Home," the dance ended.

She had been to a dance. It had been a good one. There had been no cause for her to be worried, except that she might have known the chaperones would glare at her. Everyone had liked her dress—it had brought more than second looks—and she'd certainly danced. The stags had been wonderful. She hadn't gone more than a few feet at one time without being cut in on. And the music had just made her feel crazy. But those looks from the chaperones. She hadn't minded them then, but

she hoped Dick's mother hadn't been there. Oh, well, she'd been to a dance and it had been a good one.

She had been to a dance. She wasn't at all sure that it had been a nice one. There had been a great many stags, and some of them acted very queerly indeed. But they were such nice looking boys and Dick's friends. She couldn't have said anything to them. But—the girls—one girl in particular. Her dress was much too extreme, and her dancing!—well. She only hoped that the girl Dick talked so much about hadn't been there. She knew she wouldn't be like any of those. But everyone had been very nice and polite to her, and she'd done her duty for Dick. Yes—she'd been to a dance.

THE FAIRY JEWELER

Deep in the heart of Wonderland,
Lives the fairy jeweler—he
Sells precious gems of a magic brand
In his shop in the old oak tree.

There are diamonds fashioned of glistening dew,
Which he finds on cobwebs grey;
There are sapphires cut from the sun-flecked blue
Of the lake on an autumn day.

He has gathered pearls from the mystic haze
That veils the blue of the sky;
And gold he takes from the sun-god's rays,
As he beams from his throne on high.

Of emeralds, too, he has a store,
Plucked from the wild sea's mane;
And opals he finds at his very door,
When the sunbeams smile through the rain.

He will sell you a necklace of diamonds bright,
To wear at the break of day;
But just as soon as the world is light,
The diamonds will melt away!

He will sell you a dozen opal rings,
And a glistening emerald chain;
But you may not wear these magic things
'Till the sunbeams smile through the rain.

For every gem is enchanted, quite—
And only brownies and fays
Can wear his diamonds in broad daylight,
And his sapphires on rainy days.

BOOK REVIEW

HOW often do we sit in class and wonder—not about what the professor says, but what he would like to say? How often do we gaze up at a house and wonder what kind of a life the professor leads when he lives there?

Willa Cather must have wondered, too, but she found an answer. And it was a valuable answer, for she has passed it on for us to peruse.

Willa Cather has again produced a superb book, another character sketch which will live. She has portrayed a man in the most trying period of his life; a man growing old; and a professor growing old.

It is American to the core—the chief figure is a poor professor, and is he not an American institution; and his daughters, so opposite and yet so like himself, growing up to become American institutions in themselves, families; and the professor's wife—so true to life—growing old along with him, yet fighting age and conquering it, as women will. An interesting family, it is true—and yet the professor tires of them as men will, and he lives within himself more and more. How cleverly our author shows this withdrawing, and turns it out again for us to gaze upon and meditate over, and we come to live with the professor in the old sewing room.

The old sewing room, still another American institution, with the sewing woman who comes for "days." It is the people who come quietly into our lives at such regular periods that we do not appreciate their presence, who know us well, and who can read and sympathize with our innermost thoughts. In times of stress and storm, these people are closest to us and meet our every need, as the professor discovered. They are like lights which guide us always so that we do not notice them, but in a fog, they stand out clear and bright, and we realize their true value as they show us the way along a vague road.

But these details are but half the story. Willa Cather pictures not only American institutions, but America—America, in its earliest civilization and its pioneer state. She gives us life in a small railroad town of the South, work on a western ranch, along with the life among professional classes. Her portraits of America's many social groups are sympathetic but honest, and we can but admire her mastery of the story form while we are lost in a study of the characters.

The atmosphere of the book can be given in the opening sentence. "The moving was over and done. Professor St. Peter was alone in the dismantled house where he had lived ever since his marriage, where he had worked out his career and brought up his two daughters." And on the fly leaf, we find a phrase which expresses our appreciation of Willa Cather's work in setting forth the environment which we, as American youths, find in college, "A turquoise set in silver—yes, a turquoise set in dull silver."

THE HARVEST MOON—By Ernest Poole

It is a far cry from The Harbor to The Harvest Moon and I can not help thinking that Mr. Poole would have done better to stand by his dock yards. Great, sweeping sociological problems are more in his line than the lives of individuals, especially of children.

As a rule I like to read about sensitive little boys. There are many of them in literature from Jean Christophe, through Sentimental Tommy to the Moon Calf; but somehow Amory does not ring true. His romantic imaginings and his breathless sentimentalizings are hardly credible.

Perhaps the most interesting study in the book is the conflict between the grandparents for possession of Amory's mind, body, and soul. Grandfather Wade, a romantic adventurer with a fresh and appealing viewpoint, clashes with Grandmother Barnes, a domineerng, narrow-minded materialist. Amory is in complete sympathy with his grandfather and thrills at his stories of Russia or the magnificent Rockies. He plans secretly to escape from his quarrelsome family and join Grandfather Wade on a long trip. In the end, rather miraculously, he obtains his wish. Grandmother Barnes and her weak willed son relinquish their grasp when they see that they can never dominate Amory's thought.

It is hard to see just why the author brought a child into his book at all, for he has concentrated all his powers of analysis upon the adults. The morbid atmosphere of hatred and suspicion which permeates Amory's home, the constant battle between mother and daughter-in-law, are more than a background for Amory. They are the essence of the story itself. The suffering of the little boy is not half as poignant as that of his mother. In fact one cannot be sure that Amory suffered at all. He is not given the capacity for profound suffering. He is not given any sort of depth. All that one sees is a wistful little figure loving songs and wishing for the moon.

A MILLION YEARS

Stars shone a million years ago
To make this jewelled light,
And million years have formed this world
To intercept their light.
Aeons past, shaped from the earth,
Inert and drab and still,
The pulsing, beating thing called life,
And soul, and mind, and will.

A million years, a little thing,
Among the circling stars!
A million years, a mystery,
That prisons man with bars!

Truth stands, a shrouded figure dim
In the abyss of time,
In silence rapt, as if she heard
The clear, celestial rhyme
Stars sing in symphony.
Without the bound of space
Their great, eternal harmonies
Paint joy upon her face.

Those million years are merely song,
Too high for ears of man.
A million years that make him dream
A universal plan.