

The Yearling as a Found Poem

Composed by Harrellland 7th grade students

Part 1, Chapters 1-15

(1)

A column of smoke rose thin and straight
His mother was hanging pots and pans after noon dinner
He swung himself over the fence and began to head east
The April day was framed by the tawny sand and the pines
He reached the thick-bedded sand of the Silver Glen road
A secret and lovely place
The sun dropped through and lay on his head and shoulders
He had planned to make a flutter-mill
It ran strongly with a firm current
Jody could not tell the time of day in the grayness
As he stood hesitant whether to go or stay
The rain ended as gently as it had begun
And across the east a rainbow arched
So lovely and so various that Jody thought he would burst with looking at it
A spring of delight boiled up within him
He lifted his arms and held them straight from his shoulders
He became dizzy and dropped to the ground flat
The earth whirled under and with him
The weather gray of the fence was luminous in the rich spring light
He was addled with April and dizzy with spring

(2)

A boy ain't a boy too long
Penny Baxter was either a brave man or crazy
It was not hindrance
They slapped their thighs and roared with laughter from their beards
She never saw the light of day
The day'll come, he'll not even care to ramble

(3)

The dogs barked at the big, black shadow
Pa looking beyond the dead animal
Old Slewfoot done it
The rooster crowed
The sun lifted like a vast copper skillet
Bright streaks thickened and blended
The smell of breakfast—grits and gravy

(4)

The great nubbed track lay heavy on the warm air
The bear was a hurricane—a black shapeless form
Roaring in Jody's ears
Old Slewfoot had sure done damage
She yelped once and then was silent
Pass the big knife; we'll settle this

(5)

There's trades where all is satisfied
Foresters is fools for dogs
Jody has got to mix with men and learn the ways
The sand road was a sunny ribbon, leaf-shadowed
Ancient axe marks blazed the trail
The Spaniards made this trail
The quiet of the forest exploded—a commotion broke loose
A pack of dogs streamed into the open
Hit safe for a feller to git down here?
Fodderwing's face was luminous
Jody had some secret understanding of the crippled boy's longing for flight
for lightness; for a moment's freedom from his body,
earth-bound and bent and stumbling.
His heart swelled, aching for the fox-squirrel,
the gray fur as soft as a flannel nightgown

(6)

Forresters trooped in
Black eyes darting
My gun wouldn't shoot—backfired on Ole Slewfoot
Worthless feist tenderly in his arms
You had him on bear? Close.
Black eyes riveted on the feist—do he track good?
No notion of trading him—you'd just git cheated
What was you huntin?
Old Slewfoot
A roar broke—where's he—gone
Ought to be dead and gone to glory
Excited by the savory plenty—pans big enough to wash in
Food melted away before them
As crooked as the Oaklawacha River

(7)

Bam—his gun backfired
Slewfoot crushed Julia to his chest
Foresters listened with mouths open—name your trade
Lem whistled to the feist. He balanaced the gun indifferently

Jody waved after his father.
Relished in his own words
He played with Fodderwing the rest of the afternoon.
Spaniards behind the magnolia tree
Idle music in love with the melody
Fodderwing's crazy
How could ma disapprove of such frolicsome people

(8)

What did she say when she seed the new gun and meat?
If 'twas anybody but a no good fool like you
I'd swear you'd been out thieving
But you told it to the Forresters
As if we was mighty bold hearted
Well, son, that's what makes it a tale
The truth a tangled pain and pleasure

(9)

A soft rain fell in the night
Young mulberries filled his stomach
Breakfast in the kitchen
Jody was ready for work
Old Julia dragging around
Lack of abundant water an apology to his family
The end of the world
Like a sinkhole, Fodderwing had said
The world laid at their feet was sixty feet deep
A hickory was as wide as a man's thigh
A half-grown raccoon peering around the side
You kin tame anything excusing the human tongue

(10)

Coming down with the measles
Bitter brew infinitely worse
In mysterious wisdom descended on her
She had discovered the truth
That's why we're goin fishin
I thought you was give out and Jody ailin
Nothing ailed but green brierberries
Being sick was something of a treat
A weight like a millstone dropped at the end of his line
Jody put the small fish back
The cranes were dancing a cotillion as surely as it was danced at Volusia
Soundlessly, part awkwardness, part grace
The earth was dancing with the cranes

And the low sun
And the wind and the sky
They were in a trance from the strong spell of its beauty.

(11)

The thought was encouraging; he wouldn't feed no creeturs
There's a buck big enough to ride
Penny studied the multiple tracks; hide your gun
A light breeze moved through leaves
Jody held his breath
The fawn bleated; she broke away
It seemed alive, stirring with a breath of its own
It moved with a maddening slowness
Jody scowled blackly
Silence took over the scrub
A bleat sounded
A doe bounded over the palmettos
The fawn ran to her
It was spotted
The doe was not content—she had traced his scent
The doe wheeled and kicked the fawn
Sprawling into the bushes
Jody ran to the place he had seen the fawn tumble
Well, son, what did you see?
I can't find the fawn—wasn't you proud to see it so clost?
I'd shore love to ketch him and keep him.
Nothing here was tempting
Jody wandered back to the glass case
Glowed with a sense of virtue; longed to be good and noble.
You cain't go thru life chunkin things at all the ugly women.

(12)

Hit's Oliver
Turn out you lazy landlubbers
That's what a sailor comes home for—that's for my gal.
Nobody takes my gal away
That yellow headed Twink
The Forresters were killing Oliver
Wounded
Bleeding
Like dogs tearing flesh from his throat and shoulder
Lem drew back his fist and struck Oliver
He came to his knees then wavered to his feet
He smiled through the dirt and blood
I hate girls

(13)

I dreamed the fighting—memory thrusting like pain
The fighting was true—this'll likely end neighborin with the Forresters
The Forresters were rough as his mother insisted
Two against one was unjust
Must I say goodbye to Oliver—I got to see Twink
Jody's a man if I do say it
Everything was all right when he understood it
He felt deserted
His father, of course, stood as unchangeable as the earth

(14)

As though the grass had exploded
Black-hearted thieves
Wobbled to the carcass
Like a hot knife buried into the shoulder
It was lighting that struck him—it was a branch that fell
When there is trouble waiting for you, you jest as good go meet it
He saw his father stagger backwards
Writhed in its spasms
Pools of cool water
Cried bitterly—Pa, ye'll bleed to death
Old Death was loose in the scrub
Without Penny there was no Earth
He was torn with hate for all death, and pity for all aloneness

(15)

He skirted the carcass
The buzzards clacked their wings
Impatient to return to their business
He crawled past the palmetto
Movement in front of him startled
He whispered, It's me
It was quivering
It shook him through with its liquid eyes
Its head bobbed with his stride
His heart thumped with its acceptance of him
As he lay beside the fawn
It did not seem to him
That he would ever be lonely again



Pieces of the Poem found from the novel and composed by:

1—Hannah and Audrey, 2—Logan, 3—Gabe, 4—Nico, Cam, Joe, 5—Stephen, 6—Stephen, DL, 7—Darinelle, DL, 8—Dante, 9—Hunter, 10—Marina, Nikki, 11--Darinelle, Jackson, Logan, 12—Logan, DL, 13—Vicki, 14—Gigi, Ema, Lillian, 15—Maddie, Maya