

The Yearling as a Found Poem

Part 2, Chapters 16-24

16

Like harp strings on a frail wooden body
the man shoved him playfully
Jody had to laugh at him
They's a wash-tub o' honey here...paler than fine
a needle point of fire stabbed his neck
rags blazed ...he touched fire to moss
wild honey bees flew in and out of the cavity.
Red bay and loblolly were in full blossom
"You want your blasted baby to..."
Rob that bee tree by the sink hole
Way up the south wall

17

Ain't it cute and foolish
Watching him with as wise a look as Old Julia
Their walk was like a dance wrestling, snarling
"Fodderwing! Hit's Jody."
His eyes were unseeing
The words had no meaning
A coldness followed
You come too late
He was confused..."I've lost my boy"
Jody was frightened
No words came
Now he understood
This was death; silence that gave back no answer
The ache turned into a longing for the fawn
If I had a fawn I'd name him Flag, Flag the Fawn
There was happiness tangled with his grief
Both comfortable and unbearable.

18

Saffron light reached under the low hanging live oaks
Sweet bay filling the sink hole with fragrance
He could see the whole deep-sunk bowl at once
Far away a red bird sang richly
A mother raccoon came to the limestone troughs
Two young ones peered after her
The sink hole lay all in shadow
It would have been better to have gone away believing

19

The snakes were crawling on palmetto buds
It means bad weather
I hope it's a pure hurricane
Something's comin'
Now who wisht for this?
The clearing seemed alien and unfriendly
Vegetation was beaten flat

Flag's ribs and backbone were visible
The water was knee-deep in the lot
The kitchen seemed safe and intimate
Days passed with no change
I don't reckon all Floridy history has had such a rain.

20

The flood had played havoc with the small animals
Make a tour of exploration
"Kin Flag foller along?"
This here is serious. Jody hung his head.
The road dipped sharply...rubbish of all sorts
Bodies by the dozens
There was a great silence
Flood waters had rushed down
A fine buck stared at them. "Eat or be eaten; kill or go hungry"
They made a camp
Mill Wheel had disappeared
Old Julia lifted her voice.
I hate things dyin;
The men were silent
They called the dogs away from the dead panther.
Shadowy fingers reached through the luminous sky.
The smell of roasting meat was enticing.
Stars twinkled, the first in nine days
A pool of silver minnows
Pines swayed; he didn't want to go to sleep
An owl hooted
A panther screamed
It was an alligator
Jody could look straight across into the sunrise
The magic had died with the flames of the campfire
The prairie was a flat body of water.

21

The world seemed empty
The smell of death lay everywhere
It seemed to have appeared wholesale out of the air
"Hit's the black tongue."
Speculation absorbed Jody
Fear shot through him like a hot knife
"Pa—Flag. He'll not git it, will he?"
Don't ask me them questions; wait like me and see.
Things happened with no reason and made no sense
Death is only one short step beyond a present misery.

22

Old Slewfoot polluted the swamp waters
Back to feed on...sweet potatoes...the syrup kettle swinging over plumb fat
He kicked up his heels
Frying sausage, a peace offering to the stomach
"Hit'll do you no harm"
The great bear thought
"to eat some sugar cane"

He studied the 'taters
Anticipated the cycle over again.
"That's all right; I know a heap now."

23

November burned bright as a campfire
Squinting into the flames...Fodderwing's Spaniard
His eyes twinkled in the firelight
The young calf bleated
The cry was one of terror
The creature's eyes caught the light in pairs
Corrupt pools of shining water
Fangs glistened as white as garfish bones
"We ain't no match for no hungry pack"
They prepared chunks of raw meat and inserted poison
The wolves had invaded

24

I don't remember no stumps around that pond
The stumps moved; they were bears, bout a dozen
Some of the cubs had climbed saplings
Jody climbed after them
The limb cracked faintly
At last they dropped.
The haze has thinned and vanished
The November air was crisp
Debris from the flood was thick
The log was an eight foot alligator
Got fat on the flood
Creatures of the water and air survived
Things whose home was solid land perished, trapped between alien elements
Wind and water.
Penny fired.
"I don't mind staying home alone when yall come home with sich as that."
The words were as strengthening as the sweet potatoes.



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

(16) Lily and Maddie (17)Victoria and Ema (18)Darinelle (19)Joseph and Dante (20)Hannah, Marina, Audrey
(21) Gigi (22)Uma (23)Maya and Nicolas (24)DL and Gabriel