

Amid Cornfields & Slaughterhouses (Zuihitsu)

John Repp

Ruminating whether “the imagination” could function amid corn fields & slaughterhouses, he nevertheless thought the East “dank & filthy.” A youngster in a wetsuit zigzagged by on a power-ski. Here, “Arkansas” is a river, not a state. His notes bear a characteristic, faux-cynical melancholy.

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Ticketing counter, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. Day.

YOUNG ANGULAR MAN in worn dungarees and crisp white shirt steps to the counter, ducks his head, brushes his Stetson with a finger, FLIGHT ATTENDANT managing a weary smile, fingers jittering above her computer keyboard.

YOUNG ANGULAR MAN

Mornin’ ma’am. Ah need a flight to Wichita.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Ya’ll from Wichita?

YOUNG ANGULAR MAN

barks a laugh

Not hardly!

Everyone in line snickers.

Blackout.

*

Trim everything to the nearly nothing a flame requires to burn blue & cold.

*

Sarah said *A moral*
is something you don’t see
in a story. You have to
look for it.

What if

you can't find it?

said Marisol. *That's not*

the story's problem

said Sarah, at which

Marisol grinned.

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Driving to Lake George, DB & I pass a sign reading "Italian Beer Garden." Me: "What's an 'Italian Beer Garden'?" DB: "A bad idea."

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I killed two wasps & a caterpillar yesterday, kicked this morning through the chickens to retrieve five eggs, watched the huge white sheepdog drool as thunder broke overhead, shucked two ears of corn for lunch & read the last fifty-six pages of *The Road to Wigan Pier* as clouds of mosquitoes misted the porch screen at sunset. Oh, I kept forgetting the city, too.

*

He has three children

he'll not see grow.

*

A heron swoops past the roof-lip. Ravens screech in pairs. Ah, the resort to "nature" for "consolation." Still, small birds with rusty heads & mottled bodies hurtle through the air, beaked cylinders between wing-beats the wind makes rare. Still, on break outside the Somerville Theater, one ironworker yells to another, "Must've been all that fried dough!"