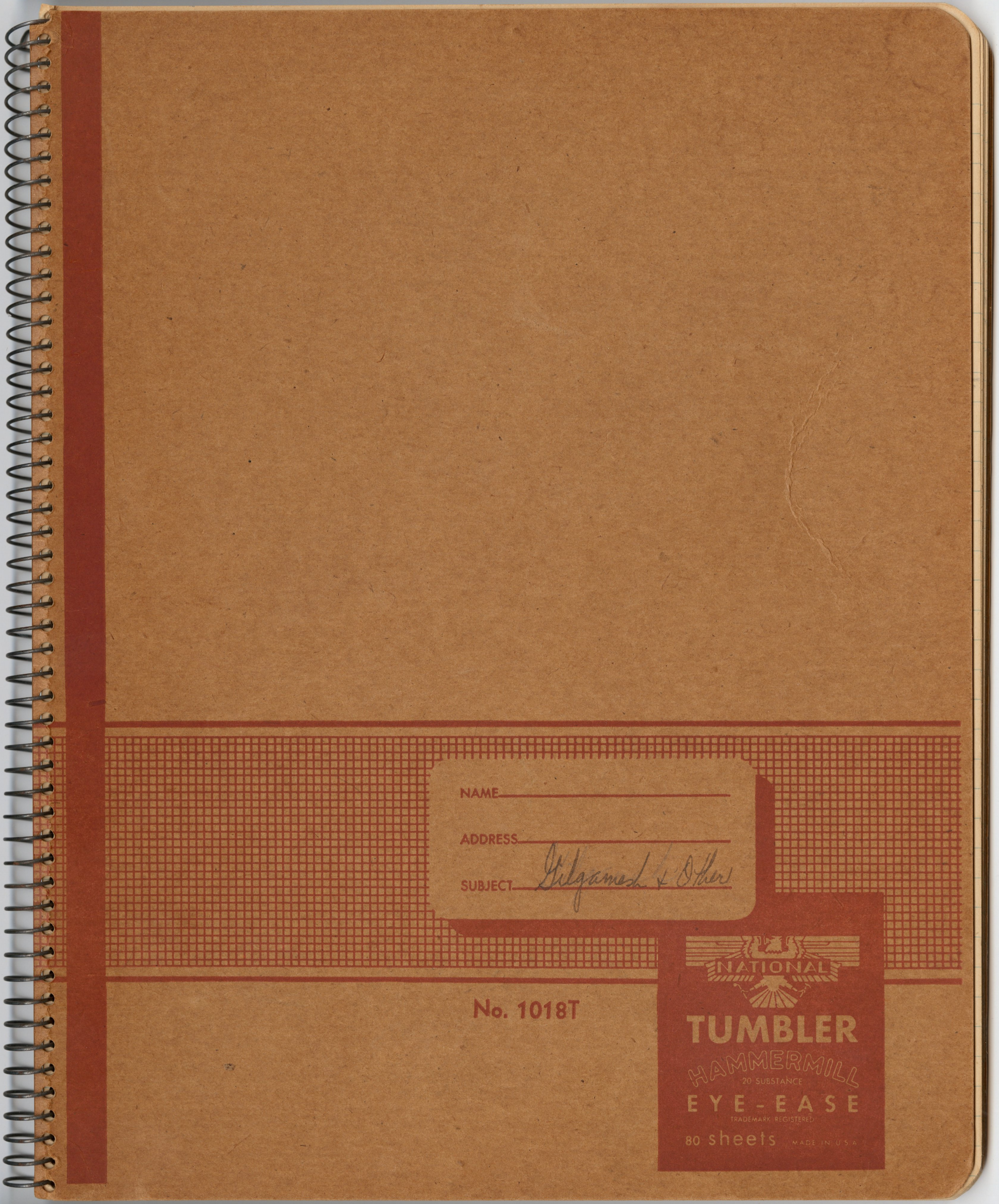

NAME

ADDRESS

SUBJECT Gilgamesh + Other

No. 1018T

NATIONAL

TUMBLER

HAMMERMILL

20 SUBSTANCE

EYE-EASE

TRADEMARK REGISTERED

80 sheets MADE IN U.S.A.

10/16/54 Fear of the complete, the finished, that which has an end and is done.

I mow the lawn — ~~a just~~ but before the job is finished am tempted to leave some little strip undone. Or I pull out the flower stalks after frost and am strongly moved to leave one bed unpulled — as if suspecting that an unknown potential may exist in the unpulled bed which I would fail to know if all the stalks are uprooted.

Also ~~there is the feeling that~~ the complete is an affront to God. Would you plant flowers for the entire length of the fence? ~~It would~~ Completion would exhaust all possibilities of alteration ~~in completion~~. It would be an imposition of the self and the will — to bring something mercilessly closed upon itself.

These are vague feelings that one experiences almost without noting.

And finishing a book. It lies whole, complete and read — it seems to no longer hold a portion of the unknown and lies on the shelf with its possible remnant of mysterious wealth. It is too forward to conquer.

Art in the sense of a finished thing tortured into unity out of reality hurts me.

Going along with the fear of the complete is the love of the fragmentary. How wonderful the sketches for piano of Moussorgsky must be! Everything unfinished, existing in isolated and unrelated perceptions of truth.

Perhaps it is in the disguise of death — fear of the end, where what went before must be assessed, failure admitted.

A crippled angel mourned -

6/2/54

The land & sea are sewn (together)
like caressing fingers, etc.
reaching long fingers of water & stone
interlocking
And it is there that transition works — change, the becoming

border disputes

Technique is the instrument that stabilizes talent or artistic ability, the fire & madness of the spirit. Technique transforms the undependable spiritual state into dependable mechanism. The poet may wait to be "possessed" — then write; he is subordinating control to the brilliance & beauty of his flight — the poem almost writes itself. Technique enables one to work regularly and to call upon the reserves of fire little by little. The possessed poet must write quickly for he cannot know how long possession will last. The technician can relax and be confident — work & develop.

Same is true of a batter. He has a natural ability to hit baseballs. But, rather than go out on the field and depend on "being in form" — that curious psychological phenomenon by which the batter can do nothing wrong — the better practices day in & day out — trying to make concrete the ability he has at moments of inspiration or good luck.

6/3/54 Technique of course is self-limiting. The virtues of any poetry necessarily exclude other virtues [the method demands to be consistent, which makes it style and noticeable. Ideally, or in the greatest poets, clever techniques, or identifiable, classifiable mannerisms are not found. They are more natural, but so rich that they need no pretty devices. Style should be condemned as F.L. Wright shows. Organic architecture vs ~~style~~ mere style.

Wordsworth in some of his lesser poems was easily open to parody — but how can you parody Prelude? It is too big, natural, unaffected.

A beautiful physical image — might be called gradient of difference or line of difference, the degree of contrast where two dissimilar things meet, such as sea and land, dramatic opposites. The activity is directly proportional to the gradient of difference. An easy transition may produce little activity, biological or otherwise, while the sudden meeting of two opposites may produce temporary chaos, violent readjustments, lots of experiments. Very beautiful. Dramatic contrasts.

6/4/54 Otto of Freising 12th Century The Two Cities.

"... man ought by no means to cleave to the things of time."
There is the City of Heaven (eternal) and the City of Earth (temporal)

The Two Cities

time	eternity
earth	heaven
devil	Christ
Babylon	Jerusalem

Saying prayers for the things of time

The wheel & the square. The wheel, circle, roundness is associated with change — these move easily, speedily, they are unstable. The square (cube) is stable, resistant to motion, resolved. I can't find the section that refers to this

From William of Tyre 12th C. A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea.

"while he is trying to escape Charybdis, he usually falls into the clutches of Scylla..." By being utterly faithful to facts, one 1st
~~in History~~ injures patrons. By sacrificing the facts one injures History. Which shall it be, Charybdis or Scylla?

6/6/54 Experience is far more profound than thought, which is a thinning form of experience. Experience carves in, rationality alone cannot extract. You may understand what experience has done to you, you cannot remove it by thought or understanding, only by re-experiencing in another direction. Experience is like the armature of things hammered into wood, to hold boards together — it shapes and gives form — in the midst of infinite potentials of thought.

Thought derives from experience — as a ghost image — shapes to some extent experience — but does not leave the abiding wounds and treasures of experience. Thought is a surface light on a deep dark and wide ocean of being.

6/7/54 I would rather keep trying to say what is too big for me than to descend to the precise + manageable.

6/20/54 Meeting the Pleiades in the bluegrass.

A weed breaks at a base joint
before giving up its root

6-24-54 On leaving for Mexico: La Nuit Anterior.

I own 7500 sq. ft. of the planet Earth. Of this, a house covers 800 sq. feet, leaving 6700 sq. feet exposed to sunlight. Life crowds every foot, competition is keen, and besides there is no water except what I hose on. Saddening when life must depend on a hostile [illegible] ~~condition~~ contrivance! ~~What will become of all this?~~

(A giant landlord, I own thousands of square feet.)

The phlox on the row, which I have kept well watered, grassless and supplied with Vigoro, dividing my lot and Mr. Cargill's (73) are just about to bloom, one purplish bud is showing, one floret almost in leaf. The two patches of chrysanthemums, now dark green, robust, pretty at anchor, having just taken to the Vigoro — are splendid. The gladiola bulbs given to me by Mrs. Vogel opposite neighbor have just sent up two ~~[illegible]~~, light green blades — overnight! Amazing how quickly a couple of hot days and plenty of water can work miracles. The phlox seed which I planted in my marigold — cosmos — petunia — zinnia seed beds have just come up, last night, in fact, or since yesterday. The geraniums set in a border in front of the house are in full bloom. Everything ~~[illegible]~~ is ready to ~~burst out~~ [illegible] — suddenly, in a day or so. Everything has grown in the condition of plentiful water. What now, everything set up, if the water is cut off, the weeds left ~~[illegible]~~ to show what hardiness ~~what hardiness~~ wild, objectionable things possess? ~~Oh,~~ Weak, cultivated, protected things ~~of loveliness~~ must always bear the burden of loveliness!

So we have ~~a lesson~~ the inevitable, a lesson. The beautiful will be ~~brought out~~ solicited, cared for: it can depend on the tenderness of lovers. The ugly must, shall we say, root for itself — the sourweed ~~is ugly~~ with the pathetic little ~~[illegible]~~ rusty beginnings for flowers, but its coefficient of survival is great. Nature has given to each thing a greatness — often only one greatness, but that one adequate to insure its existence.

(So I have hesitated in pulling weeds — out of respect. It is better to let weeds grow in otherwise vacant places: it increases the "quantity of life"; in every ounce of which whether sourweed or rose is ~~some~~ a greatness and ~~[illegible]~~ a weakness — nothing is pure + complete.)

(In some marriages, each person sets the other off, creating more than the addition of the two single beings. In others, each person is extinguished by the other).

(I hope every poet alive will at some time in the course of his career, in order to propitiate Edith Sitwell on her admirable Pope, cough a couple of couplets off — then, as a peasant who dips by a roadside shrine, go on his way.)

Departure is difficult. What one sees and loves is being left behind. What is to come, making leaving worthwhile, is not yet available. It is surprising and [illegible] that so many people move from wherever they happen to be standing.

The Forces of Integration:

Change: (gradients of difference – the good + bad aspects of change).

Sumerian Mythology, page 13

The Destruction of Kur, corresponding to the Babylonian goddess Tiamat, the Hebrew Leviathan, and perhaps the Greek Typhon.

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55
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by the tears, "Don't tell me you ain't come home to stay."

"I have, Pa. I've come home to stay."

The fire seemed brighter to Mr. Bowen. He leaned over, grunting with stiffness, and lifted the Luzianne coffee can and spat copiously. He cleared his throat, sniffed at the tears in his own eyes and said "Well, we'll have our house again." The Big House." Ah,...Ella, what's happened, child?" "Where's Paul?"

"He's in Massachusetts, I believe or somewheres up north. He got moved to another camp. I told him I wasn't going. And I ain't. There ain't no man in the world could drag me off up there round them curious people, Northerners. I belong here, and I'm staying here, I told him. And I am, Pa."

"What about your farm up there in Clarkton?"

"I ain't got a farm. They didn't ever make out a deed. I didn't know it. Aaron, I reckon he thought they wasn't no use in it. I never asked him if he had one or didn't. And the other day, old Lady Hamilton ~~told me~~ ordered me to get off the place, said she wasn't having no wife of Aaron's whoring around on her own property."

"You're married, ain't you, Ella."

"Shore, I'm married. It was all right, long as I didn't do nothing but work and tidied up the place. 'You're living in my house,' she say, 'Ella, whoever you are, and you ain't welcome around here.' Well, I didn't have a deed, Pa. I was dumb."

"It was the Lord's will. To brighten my last days.

In the following month, Ella got complete charge of the farm. She told the four tenant families, not counting Florence, ~~to trim the hedgerows, clean and deepen the ditches,~~ that there was no better ground in the county, thanks to the way her father had built it up, than what they were standing on, and that if they ~~[illegible]~~ wanted to stay there, they'd better keep it that way. She told the men to trim the hedgerows and clean and deepen the ditches. She told them how much to plant and where and when to plant it. She ~~talked to~~ induced her father ~~about making~~ to make Lizzie stop school. ~~The Bowen agreed the~~ Because of Florence's instruction, Lizzie was far ahead of her third-grade class, and Ella wanted Lizzie away from the nasty boys and ~~playful girls~~, sexually playful girls. Florence could give her all the education she needed.

Ella pulled up ~~in front of the~~ under the chinaberry tree that stood in front of the feed barn. She got down ~~by~~ the front of the wagon, stepping on the ~~sh~~ base of the shafts and then jumping to the ground. She went up to the mule's head and then ~~as if speaking to the barn door~~ looking straight ahead as if speaking to the barn door, she said, "I don't know who you are, or what you're doing here, mister, but you ain't welcome."

The soldier was standing by the back wheel of the wagon, looking at Ella's back as she spoke. The organdy ~~dress looked out~~ with yellow flowers looked out of place. But Ella's hair was ripe brown and the soldier could sense the size and roundness of Ella's body under the organdy dress.

Ella unhitched the traces, pulled the lines out of the hames, and stepped Kate out of the traces with the calculated movement of efficiency of long familiarity (experience).

"I'm Paul Hansen Ma'am. Let me—."

Ella pretended not to hear the man. She ~~untied the~~ jerked loose the leather hame's cord, unsnapped the collar at the top, pushed the backband and traces back over Kate's rump, and lead Kate into the stable, built as a lean-to on the left side of the barn, and latched the gate. She got the package from the wagon and walked ~~back~~ to the back door of the house and went in.

Paul stood for several moments by the back wheel of the wagon. Then he saw the woodpile on the far side of the backyard. It was off to the side of a large pecan tree and a large number of pine blocks about a foot and a half long and 10 inches thick lay in a disorderly pile around the working place. The sight of the woodpile, the mound of chips that had risen over many years, and the axe stuck into the end of an upright block ~~made~~ filled Paul with a deep nostalgia for his young days in the Minnesota woods. ~~Wood had been Paul's religion~~ and made him think of cleanliness, beauty, and a sweet smell. Wood had been a pure, virgin thing to Paul. ~~He~~ He had sawed it, split it. He had breathed the thin, clean air where it grew. He remembered his father & mother, travelling with saw crews from mill to mill, from forest to forest in the north country of Minnesota.

He walked over and hit down on the handle of the axe with the base of his hand. The axe broke loose and he lifted it, weighing it in his hands. The edge was ~~dull and~~ blunt and scalloped. He looked around and found a file lying at the base of the pecan tree. He sat down on the block and holding the axe across his knees, studied it, looking at it from all sides, deciding how to file it ~~to~~ to a perfectly balanced ~~thin~~ edge. He worked cautiously, pausing often, as if he had unlimited time.

The first stroke of the axe startled Ella and she ran in confusion to the back door, the name Aaron flying into her mind in spite of her awareness that it was the soldier. She flung the

? Too hot?

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(door) open and went out on the back porch, ready to order the man off her premises. Paul had taken his cap off and ~~his blond hair~~ the full waves of his blond hair ~~fell forward over his forehead~~ were falling apart, as if the wind had been in them, and were threatening to tumble down over his forehead. He was holding a slab of pine cut through the heart in his left hand and was chipping off the lengths of wood with the axe in his right hand. He was not hurried. He seemed engrossed in a kind of music.

Ella stood for several moments watching Paul. His body was slender, without being lean. His hips were narrow and his thighs were the same width as the back of his buttocks. From his waist, ~~up~~, his back widened all the way up to his shoulders, which ~~were~~ seemed fuller than the rest of his body. "Aaron," Ella said under her breath and ran back into the house. She fell across the bed and cried for a long time and went to sleep.

Ella felt new when she woke up at four o'clock. ~~She was hungry and when she~~ She felt fresh and thought perhaps it had ~~started~~ turned cool. She went into the kitchen and about half an hour later went out on the back porch.

"Oh," she said, gaining the man's attention; "Supper'll be ready after a while. There's water ~~here at the~~ and soap here at the pump," she said pointing to the wash bench on the back porch. Her heart filled up her whole body, and she could hardly breathe.

"Thanks, Ma'am." That was all the man said.

Ella had forgotten about the towel, but she got a fresh one hung on the hook beside the tiny mirror on the backporch and got back into the kitchen before she heard the man's heavy feet strike the doorsteps.

"My ~~father fel~~ Pa left the woods when I was ~~at~~ seventeen," Paul said, as they were having coffee, "~~so I joined the Army.~~" and went into wheat farming. So I joined the Army. I didn't like the flat fields, with no fast hawks; never ~~saw~~ a mother bear with her cubs, or streams anything. Mostly, it was the still woods, so ~~big~~ mighty wide, and awful cold and white in the wintertime. I guess I should've gone off following some camp by myself, but it wouldn't've seemed right again without my Pa and brothers. And Ma. So I joined the Army, ~~instead~~.

"I reckon you just about cut up all ma wood," Ella said.

"I left some for the next time."

"When Pa gave up lumbering," Paul said at supper, "and ~~went into~~ started wheat ~~growing~~ farming—said it was better for him, he was getting too old—I ran away from home joined the Army. I didn't like the flat fields, with no fast hawks; never saw a mother bear with her cubs, or streams, or anything. Mostly, I missed the still woods, so wide, and awful cold and white in the wintertime. I guess I should've gone off following some camp by myself, but it wouldn't've been the same without Pa and my brothers. And Ma. So I joined the Army."

"How old was you, then?"

"Seventeen. Been in fifteen years."

"Well, ~~I can add~~ that's good at figures, at least. ~~You're~~ That makes you thirty-two. ~~I wanted to know~~ How long ~~have~~ you been at Ft. Bragg?"

"Six years. In one place. Nothing but sand and scrub oaks."

"Have some more ham. And butterbeans."

"This is fine."

"You might just as well have some more. I got plenty of 'em. I got some grape wine, I been keepin' for ma fruitcakes. Let's have some, just. Maybe we better wait till after ~~we have some~~ the coffee, though."

"What do you do all the time."

"Work. Just work all the time."

"That's what the fellow said."

"What feller?"

"The one at the store."

~~"What did he tell you, anyhow~~

"So you was talking ~~to him~~ about me. What'd he say, anyhow?"

"Did you see me?"
"Yeah, I did." What'd he.

"He said you were a sad woman. And that you worked all the time. He said you must've loved your husband."

"I used to laugh. I've got the best farm around here and tend to it. As for my husband, he's dead."

"I was married once."

"Is she dead, too?"

"Hell, no. I was drunker than she was, that's all. She collected an allowance