

Interview with Endora W.
page p 154 H

Walt Whitman
Endora



Interview with

PLAYING
AFTER
DARK



BARBARA
LAZEAR
ASCHER



"UNCORRECTED MANUSCRIPT"

A VISIT WITH EUDORA WELTY

She's worn a pretty hat for the occasion, ~~an~~ occasion she says she has dreaded ever since the arrangements were made. ~~Ever~~ Ever since she decided to make an exception to her rule, no interviews. Her blue eyes draw the visitor through the gate of the Jackson, Mississippi airport to a cool outstretched hand with fingers so long and slender you know they were made for weaving tales.

The smile is shy, ~~that~~ that of an eleven year old entering a birthday party where she knows no one, but her mother insisted she come. The voice is soft and hesitant. "You look like a Virginia girl." She reaches for my bag. "No! That's much too heavy." After all, she is seventy five. Her hair is white. She is slight and walks with slow care in a shiny, brand new pair of loafers. Her knit dress matches her eyes. The next day when we have settled into pants, comfortable shoes and friendship, she tells me, "I would have worn pants to the airport, but I thought, ~~she~~ She'll think I'm some sort of a hick!"

"You mustn't carry that bag. It's full of books. I don't seem to be able to travel without them." She relaxes and smiles, "Oh, I'm the same way." We both continue to reach for the bag. The one connection between two strangers who want to feel at home. A passion for books. But of course she is at a disadvantage because I am the only stranger here. Her soul has been exposed. "I can't think of any American writer more universally