

The would-be Poet

My teacher said to write a poem
And then I thought
Boy, I would show 'em.
I wracked my brain,
Spent all my time
Trying to get the words to rhyme;
But suddenly it dawned on me,
A poet I would never be.

1st grade
assignment

Sorrow

It feels like a dense overcast.
I know the sun will shine tomorrow
yet the clouds hang so heavy.

Youth

youth is beautiful

youth is ugly

Youth is enlightenment

youth is darkness

The beauty of youth becomes ugly
Because childhood is so much more
beautiful than youth

The strong and sudden flash of the
light of youth blinds us
And turns our world into darkness.

Life

The passions of man,
The friends,
AND The foes
HAVE yet to be driven in quiet repose.

Life begins,
And goes on,
And ends,
But, oh, The question that nothing transcends.

I've searched for the answer in hunger
and pain;
But my efforts in vain
The answer to this ubiquitous question is
nowhere to be found.

The classics have tried, it
The mystics,
And the contemporaries,
But I find no light in my darkness of
youth

The question of life
And why it is here
will never be answered,
I fear.

J. H. S. 216
Class 912

Barbash, Judith
April 5, 1960

The Little Man That Wasn't There Or Was He?

It was an extremely warm August day in Baldwin Long Island. The sun looked like a red ball of fire that was going to fall upon the earth and set it a flame.

I was sleeping at my aunt's house and having a wonderful time with three year old Audrey and five year old Warren until my aunt told me she was going out that evening and I would have the pleasure of babysitting for my two cousins. I can't babysit tonight I said to myself. I'm supposed to go out with Peter.

I called Peter and told him the situation and added that I had to make dinner for the children and myself and asked him if he would care to join us. "Well" he laughed "alright." Warren then took the phone and after him Audrey spoke. When the conversation ended, I don't know.

Peter arrived at eight o'clock. My aunt and uncle had already gone and I had the chicken, potatoes, and vegetables on the table so we sat down to eat. After we finished eating Peter said "not bad, but it could

have been better." I picked up a dish and was ready to hurl it at him when Audrey shouted "that's mommy's best set of dishes." I had set the table after her parents had gone.

The three were fooling around in the living room while I got the dishes in the dish washer. "It's time for bed" I called to Warren and Audrey. "What about our bath?" Warren contradicted. I was tongue tied. "You wash, I'll dry" Peter suggested. In that way we got the children off to bed.

I was drying the dishes when the phone rang. I went to answer it and was surprised because I did not get a reply to my hello. I heard nothing but heavy breathing. Peter took the receiver from my hands and placed it on the telephone. "It was probably a wrong number" he said. I continued drying the dishes, my aunt's good dishes when the phone rang again. I dropped the dish. Peter caught it. Seeing the dish still in one piece I ran to the phone, lifted the receiver, and as before got no reply so I slowly replaced the receiver where it belonged. "What's the matter?" Peter questioned? "The same thing as before I said." "Don't worry" he insisted. "But you don't understand" I said

practically in tears "this happened once before when I was babysitting for a woman near where I live." "What did you do" Peter asked. "I called my father". We both just stood there for a minute, when I burst out into tears "lets call your father" I screamed. "What's the matter" he said trying to cheer me up "don't you feel safe with me here"? I gave him a dirty look and he picked up the receiver and dialed his number. "Dad, we've been getting some anonymous calls" I heard him say. Peter hung up the phone and told me his father would be right over. When the door bell rang I was too scared to open it so Peter let his father in. "What's going on" I heard him say he said. "Somebody's been calling, only there was nobody there, but there had to be somebody there because he was breathing." "He was breathing" Peter's father said. "See why, he's me." "Ohh" I rebuked, then gasped because the phone rang. "Now you answer it" I told him. He lifted the phone, stood there for a minute or two, replaced the receiver then said to me "he was breathing." "Ohh" I murmured and then walked toward Warren and Audrey's room to check on them. My

scream brought the two kids to my rescue. There was a man outside the wide-open window. I went to Audrey and started lifting her out of her bed when I was questioned by Peter "What are you doing?" "I want these two where I can see them." Then Peter lifted Warren and followed me into the livingroom where the two were placed on the couch. I was shaken up. "I can't take this any longer" I screamed. Peter got me a glass of water, and bringing it back to the kitchen he dropped it. In the process of picking up the glass he cut his finger. "Come on" I said "I'll fix it up." I turned on the bathroom light, got one look of the same man I had seen before now climbing in the bathroom window and blacked out.

The next thing I knew there were four policemen swarming around the house. They were very efficient Peter said. He told me they had taken ~~ten~~ minutes to get here. They questioned the three of us and, then after finding nothing returned to the police station.

When my aunt and uncle came home and found Peter's father there and Warren and Audrey there they asked for an explanation. But, what really did happen that night?

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said. "somebody's been calling, only there was nobody there, but there had to be somebody there because he was breathing." "he was breathing" Peter's father said." Gee whiz, beats me." "Ohh" I rebuked, then gasped because the phone rang. "now you answer it" I told him. He lifted the phone, stood there for a minute or two, replaced the receiver then said to me" he was breathing." "Oohh" I murmured and then walked toward Warren and Audrey's room to check on them. My scream brought the two heroes to my rescue. There was a man outside the wide-open window.. I went to Audrey and started lifting her out of her bed when I was questioned by Peter "what are you doing?" "I want these two where I can see them." then Peter lifted Warren and followed me into the living room where the two were placed on the couch. I was shaken up." I can't take this any longer" I screamed. Peter got me a glass of water and bringing it back to the kitchen he dropped. And the process of picking up the glass he cut his finger. "come on" I said "I'll fix it up." I turned on the bathroom light, got one look of the same man I had seen before now climbing in the bathroom window and blacked out.

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Judith Barbash
Eng. 44a, Mr. Cohen

Sometimes, when I think back to what I did, I wish the clocks could be turned back to before I did it. But what would be the use of that? I would only do it again. Not "again" meaning a second time. What I mean is the first time happening all over again. Oh well, maybe it's better this way. I don't think I could go through what I went through another time. Again I say I'm still referring to the first time it happened. I can't put down on this paper what made me do it, but brother, when I make a mistake it's a good one. Not one that is proper to make but one that is good and wrong. I can't say that I'm proud of myself, although I was at first pleased with the change it provided. But later on I began to miss my dark brown bouncy curls that wobbled freely upon my head like springs on a bed when you sit on them and then let them bounce up.

You see, the peroxide that I put on my hair not only made it a disgusting color but took the lively waves out and replaced them with a pile of tan straw.

You've got to admit, I have guts. I warned my mother a week ahead of time that I was going to destroy my best feature. Then to top it all off I did it the next Friday evening while my parents were watching television.

"Don't come into the bathroom" I ordered. "I want to try a new hair style to surprise you." Boy, did I. I used to be able to comb my hair when I washed it and be done until I washed I again except for combing it when I got up in the morning although I really didn't have to. Every hair was in place. You must have read somewhere about the movie stars who get up in the morning with their hair looking better than it did the night before when they went to bed. That "was" me. I emphasize the word "was" because

I sit down and cry with fateful worry that my pride and joy won't return.

Nervously I stopped the destroyer on my hair. Anxiety piling up. Tension increasing with every stroke of the comb. What would happen if mamma or pappu should walk in? On second thought it could end all my worries if she pulled out every hair on my head like she threatens every time I am disobedient which is not by any means infrequent. I was all mixed up inside. Troubled. Worried. Last year I lost a lot of weight. I now find myself constantly counting calories or stuffing myself until I'm sick. It's a racket. ^{that racket} I can't seem to escape. I wish I could forget, or be someone else but it keeps haunting me. Calories! Calories! Will I ever forget? Will I keep counting calories all my life? That's what led to this hair business. Being mixed up, I mean.

Tomorrow night my mother is going to dye my hair its natural color. What is the change now?

Only from better to worse! My hair
will be the usual dark. And
straight as sticks. I can't say that
it is definitely ~~or~~ waste or a total
loss, because I found myself, finally,
and what's more, whole
heartedly.

[about age 15, circa 1960-1961]

Judith Barbash
Eng. 44a, Mrs. [Cohns]

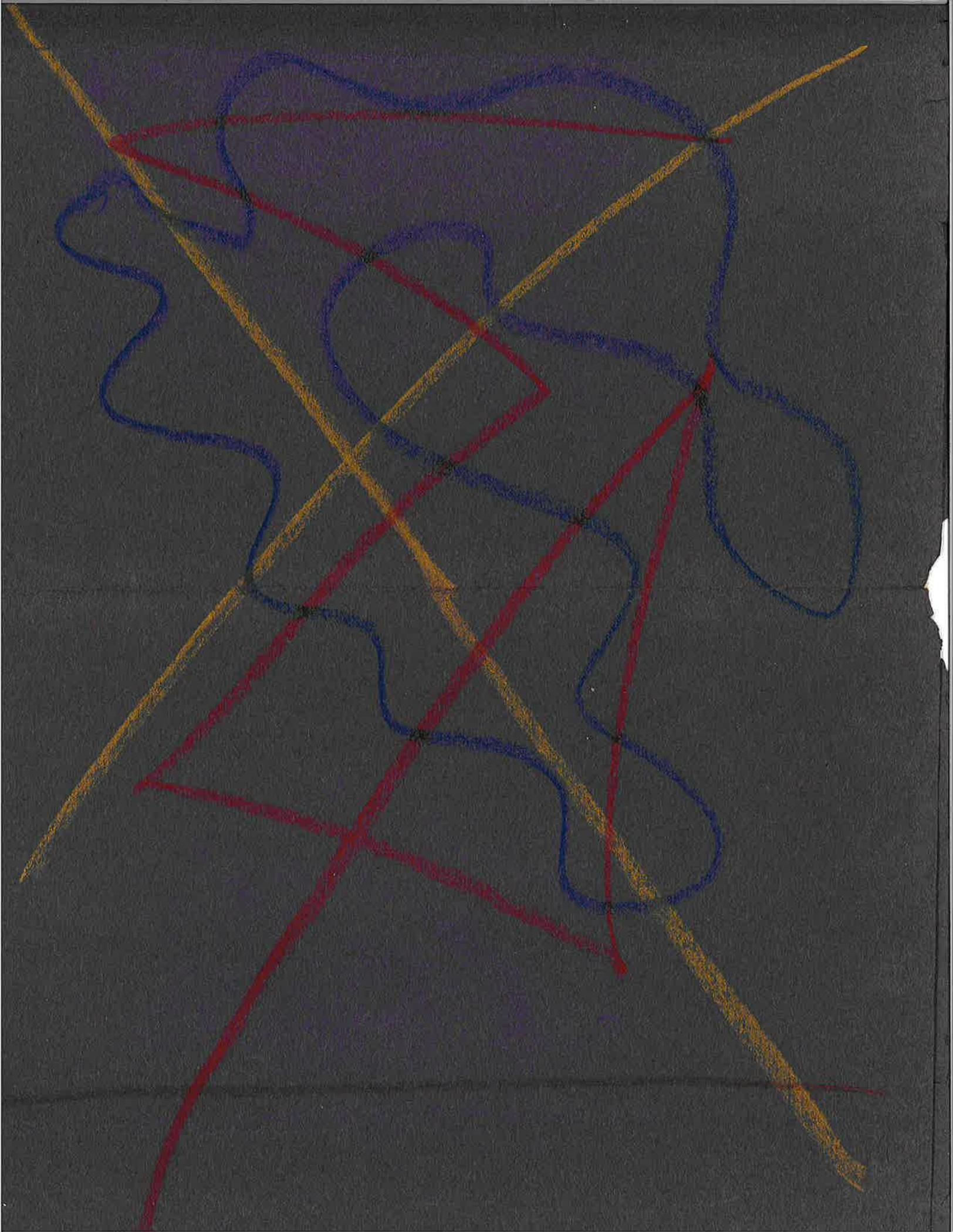
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Nervously I slapped the destroyer on my hair. Anxiety picking up. Tension increasing with every stroke of the comb. What would happen if mama or papa should walk in? On second thought it could end all my worries if she pulled out every hair on my head like she threatened every time I am disobedient Which is not by any means infrequent. I was all mixed up inside. Troubled. Worried. Last year I lost a lot of weight. I now find myself constantly counting calories or stuffing myself until I'm sick. It's a racket rat race. I can't seem to escape. I wish I could forget, or be someone else but it keeps haunting me. Calories! Calories! Well I ever forget! Will I keep counting calories all my life? That's what led to this hair business. Being mixed up, I mean.

Tomorrow night my mother is going to dye my hair it's natural color. What is the change now? Only from better to worse! My hair will be the usual dark. And straight as sticks. I can't say that it is definitely a waste or a total loss because I found myself, finally, and what's more, whole heartedly.



My Story

My story begins on July 28, 1945. It was a big day for some people although I can't remember a single happening. My recollections didn't begin until I was three years old when my aunt had a baby. I used to brag of babysitting every time my aunt went well down to my grandmother's house. Eighteen months later my aunt had another baby to which I complained about because my little year and a half year old cousin had a baby brother and I did not. I was never to have a sister or brother but at the delicate age of four and a half I hadn't given up hope yet. When I went to my mother about my complaint she just said, "well see," always, "will see." In a way I'm glad there are no other children in my family. I think I would be very jealous. Even at the age of four and a half I think I would have been jealous.

Half a year later I started school. I couldn't wait to get rid of my mother. At five years old when all the other kindergarten were crying for their parents to stay I was shooing mine away. I bet I was pretty smart in kindergarten! Anyway, things went along fine until it came time for

promotion. No, I didn't get left back. How could I after I said I was pretty smart? Well, as I was saying, when it came time for promotion, my girlfriend wanted nothing more than to be in my class, but I couldn't wait to get rid of her. Thank goodness we were split up. She bothered me. Always so bossy.

I'll never forget when I started second grade. I was such a big girl. ^{I would be going to school all day} I would be eating a big dinner at six o'clock with my parents. And, oh, those lunches! What a terrible cook the woman who made those school lunches must have been. I refused to buy another school lunch so on rainy days when I could not go home at noon my mother would bring soggy fried egg and tomato sandwiches and a large jar half-filled with chocolate milk.

~~At~~ In the beginning of fifth grade we moved from Brooklyn to Queens. I really felt sick when grandma started Cyp. I think I like her best of all my grandparents. It's really hard to say but sometimes when I think it out that's the way

2

I feel. I wonder why, when you really love
four people, you could sort of feel closer to
one? But, do you know that to this day
I haven't bought a hat that my grand-
father hasn't tied on backwards? He's
so cute!

Things were coming along fine. I
went into sixth grade and got the
only teacher that I wanted that year.
When it came time for graduation
grandma made my graduation dress. It
was the first thing she'd made me in
a long time. She now had five grand-
children and had to divide her talents
among all of us. I think I got the best
of it though. Being the first, I mean.
I think I had more clothes in the
closet that my grandmother made
than my mother bought.

On the other side of the family I
wasn't the first. I was the second.
And the last. I was born a year
and a half after Joan. We've always
been good friends - Joan and me.
We had to be. Grandma never used
to let us fight. This is the other
grandmother. She's a very nervous

person. Mama never told her if I
was home with a cold or sore a
throat. She'd probably have a night-
mare about me contacting
pneumonia and wake up in the
middle of the night wanting to call
us on the telephone, now that we
live a good forty minutes away.

Grandpa is a very stern man with
a lot of character. Oh, no! I goofed. I
put my father's mother with my
mother's father, and my mother's
mother with my father's father.
But that doesn't matter too much. We
are all really one big happy family.

Junior High was a trying exper-
ience. I had a lot of adjusting to do.
One thing was to overcome my
jealousy towards Warren and
Audrey who are ten and twelve
years younger than I am, respec-
tively. Now I feel differently to-
wards them. Sort of like parental
love. I can't really say because I've
never had any children but I
think it's because there's such
a difference in our ages. When I

was twelve I felt differently but now that I am almost seventeen, that's the way I feel. Joan and I are great friends. And why not? With nineteen months in between us, it's terrific! I can't wait for a niece (that's my aunt's first child that I spoke of before) to get a little older. We are three years apart but I think we'll be great friends too. Paul is a doll! I'm really crazy about him. I can't explain why I feel so close to him. He's a boy and we're four years apart but my mother says we're alike. Maybe that's why?

Getting back to my Junior High School years, the graduation stands out the most. That was really something! The ceremony was terrific. Joan slept at my house that week and we had a ball.

High School was really something. I decided to buckle down and get good grades and I did much to my own surprise. "We knew you could do it," my parents would say, "the only thing you had to do

was prove it to yourself." It's true!
I wish it were terrible the way parents are
right most of the time?

Now in my junior year, I
have to write an autobiography
and I wonder if I should include
everything (Composition).

Now that I know who I am
I decided to send myself to dance
ing and drama school. I have
hopes of becoming a dancer of
modern jazz and an actress.
Mother and daddy say I could
do anything if wanted it badly
enough and I set my mind to
it. I wonder if I'll make it?

[circa 1961-1962]

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Bye-Bye, John-John

The sun didn't shine That placid morning.
The day was as dull and as dreary as ever.
The nation was in a state of mourning,
And ached with a fever greater than life.
The shots rang out in the dead of noon.
One pierced his head; The other, his neck.
The impact of the shots were felt Throughout
As the bullet killed him
That hit him in the head.
You'll cry, I know
For what else can you do?
A little baby!
Bye-bye, John-John.
Your daddy's dead.

The world weeps with you, John-John
For we all loved your daddy.
Although he's dead
He loves you still.
He loves you still,
Oh, baby John.
Choke not, little one
As you eat your bread
Even Though your daddy's dead.

Your life is young,
and fresh,
and gay.
Your mother loves you
All the way.
You've a lot to live for
Let it be said.
But, bye-bye, John-John
Your daddy's dead.

J. F. B.

Without you

What a fool I was

What a dominated fool

To think you knew much more than I.

What a fool I was

What a sleepless little fool

What a suppressed little sheep was I.

No my pedantic little friend

you are not the beginning and the end.

There'll be school every year without you

D. C. still will be here without you

There'll be books on the shelves

And as sure as ourselves

There'll be homework & bells without you

all term papers will thrive without you

Somehow A's will survive without you

and there still will be books

and we shnooks won't get took

By some stinker who says we can't think.

I can do without you.

You who think you are so great

You can go to Texas, Michigan, or Kansas State.

They can still teach a class without you

Halls of Learning will stand without you

And without much ado

We can all muddle through without you

Without you pushing them the pens write well

Without your coaching us eve kids can spell

And if you leave us now I will not cry

If they can learn without you teacher

so can I.

I'll do my very best without you

I'll perform with ~~the~~ much zest without you

So go back to your bench

I can quench all my thirsts without you.

Without you

What a fool I was
What a dominated fool
To think you knew much more than I.
What a fool I was
What a sleepless little fool
What a suppressed little sheep was I.
No my pedantic little friend
You are not the beginning and the end.
There'll be school every year without you
Q.C. still will be here without you
There'll be books on the shelves
And as sure as ourselves
There'll be homework + bells without you
All term papers will thrive without you
Somehow A's will survive without you
And there still will be books
And we shnooks won't get took
By some stinker who says we can't think.
I can do without you.
You who think you are so great
You can go to Texas, Michigan, or Kansas State.
They can still teach a class without you
Halls of Learning will stand without you
And without much ado
We can all muddle through without you
Without your pushing them the pens write well
Without your coaching us eve kids can spell
And if you leave us now I will not cry
If they can learn without you teacher
So can I
I'll do my very best without you
I'll perform with much zest without you
So go back to your bench
I can quench all my thirsts without you.