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High School Visit

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HIGH SCHOOL VISIT

We sit in an office by the gym,
The din of sweating virgins in our ears;
Through the window, in white and mist,
A frozen late-model cornfield
Hangs its tatters in the wind.
Before me sits, in eagerness and fear,
A girl of the plains, pubescent and lost.

Now she crosses her legs and moves:
An application come to life,
A grade-point average now made flesh,
Risen from a seashell on Rural Route Five.
Her tight-lipped thighs speak warmly
Of moist nights under a suburban moon,
Of test scores forgotten, lost in the dark.
("What wayward chic pornographer,
Eagerly chewing his pencil
In the back room of dreamland
Could portray this aching ripeness?"
I ask, chewing my pencil.)

I am the man from *College*:
Far-off Valhalla of Truth,
Home of the four-year marathon run,
Of the grueling ascent to suburbia,
Of academics lying in wait like neuroses,
Hidden in the brush of the Great Footnote Bog.
I come here to counsel, to ogle and yawn.

But she has come to talk to *me*
(She wants admittance I mean),
To impress me into acquiescence,
To show me her latest college prep grades,
To get Mr. College to change his mind.
So in the office
We sit and talk,
Both dreaming idly of admittance —
She to College, I to her thighs;
Each deluded, each obsessed
By the bright orgiastic future
That soon will recede again.
Our words drift into the air
Like aimless wind that rustles the corn,
And sincerity melts on our lips like snowflakes
As inchoate longing tightens within:
Life, that endless string of escapes,
Is about to offer her one of its first.
Gordon Taylor