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New Roommate

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Abstract

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“ but that ain't all; he darn near drowned when he let loose!”

“Yeah,” I say mechanically without looking up from my book, “yeah, I'll bet he did.”

I force some feeling into my voice:

“Man, this psych is sure rough reading!” I rifle the pages and glance at my watch as if I don't know the time. “Jeez! Seventeen more pages and only half an hour to study 'em!” Blunt, but it will shut him up.

“Yep. . . eece-yup, yuh oughta seen his face.”

I turn a page and try to read.

‘Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that the frontal lobe of the brain functions. . .’

“But the craziest think I ever seen was when Loomer Skideria tried to count seventy.”

Oh fine! Great! If there's anything I need to know for this psych test, it's how Loomer Skideria counts seventy!

‘Sixty-six, six-seven, sixty-eight he'd say, sixty-nine. . . . skibunty!’

Study, dammit, study.

“Skibunty is what he'd say. Haw!”

Still no laugh from me.

He leaned forward: “What he was really trying to say was se-ven-ty.” He articulated the word carefully for my edification. “See?”

“Yeh, I see.” A sickly smile. By this time the only thing I am seeing is red.

“Yup, he was tryin' to say seventy. See? But he'd say skibunty! Jeez, some of them farmers is dumb.”

My thought, exactly. I nod my approval. Encouraged, he goes on. I compress my breath and glare at my book.

“Skibunty, he'd say. Countin' out bushels of wheat: sixty-eight, he'd say, then sixty-nine and then skibunty! Whoop-Haw! If he wasn't a queer one.”

Damn, wasn't he funny, though? Then aloud: “Yeh, he musta been; he was a queer one all right.”

Study. You've got to get that psych.

'Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that. . . compels the conclusion that compels the conclusion that. . .damn! Objective consideration. . .'

"An' that's the way he'd allus count 'em out: sixty-eight sixty-nine, skibunty! Skibunty-one, skibunty-two, skibunty-three, (obviously pleased with his imitation of Loomer Skideria) skibunty-six; an' that's the way he'd count."

He brays loudly and slaps his knee. "Funniest thing I ever heard."

"Yeh, sure is. That's real funny."

He wanders aimlessly, searching for other bits of information or stories to lighten the drudgery of my studies.

". . .because most of the new models have a power take-off, . . . But I don't suppose you'd know anything about that" (superior intelligence), ". . . on the John Deere, Ford-Ferguson. . ."

Prattle on, professor. Damn! Study! Try to concentrate.

'Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the tractor to pull a manure spreader at the same time the frontal lobe of the brain is commensurate with the hydraulic lift which has the innate capacity to shift the nervous system into low and lift four or five bales. . .'

'Oh, hell! What's the use.

Howard Lambert, G. E., So.



Diggers

Men burying pipe.

Diggers with callouses on their hands, and dirt-brown arms and shoulders.

Diggers of tons of earth

And thinkers of a thousand thoughts.

Brothers to the mole.

Men who have Friday night's ringer

And Saturday night's beer,

And only a mountain of dirt between them and a stretch of blue sky.

Dale Blichmann, Sci., Fr.