Well, he certainly needed courage now, with the storm steadily mounting in its fury. Could prayer free him from this senseless fear? Had he ever really believed? Had he ever expected anything to happen? Then, in the darkness of his room, while the storm continued its boisterous campaign, he prayed: “Lord, I don’t know how to pray right. Maybe I don’t know the right words, but I’m afraid of storms and I don’t want to be afraid. I do believe you can help me. Take away the fear and give me courage.”

And it happened. Before the prayer was finished, before the storm had lessened its force, there was a difference. There came a sense of relaxation, of unloosening, which started at the top of the head and moved down his body. He could put his finger on the spot, almost, it was so distinct. Gradually it moved down his body, as though someone were pulling the covers from over him, until his whole body was alive with a new feeling of freedom. He tingled all over with the wonder of it. His heart stopped its painful pounding; his head wasn’t filled with the noise of the storm; the darkness was not so oppressive. A real sense of peace and courage enveloped him. He wasn’t afraid of the storm!

Infant Climbs A Mountain

PEGGY O’DONNELL

Ever since they’d left New England behind to come west, Infant had been excited; there had been so many things to see, all new and different. At first she had thought that Indiana would be like it was in her first grade reader; that they’d live in a log cabin, that she’d wear a coonskin cap and deerskin breeches just like Dan’l Boone, (only smaller, because Infant was only six) and that there would be real live Indians with tomahawks. Mother had explained that that had been a long time ago, and that Indiana now was just like New England. But that, reflected Infant, was not strictly true.

Her big sister had turned around a little while ago and said, “Infant,” (everyone called her Infant, which wasn’t her real name at all) “we’re almost there.” She had looked out the window, interested in seeing what Indiana was like. There were endless strips of grass and weeds beside the road, long lines of telephone poles, farmhouses between fields of corn and wheat, and animals in pasture. All these things were the same, but it wasn’t as Mother had said, just like New England. There was something wrong. She removed her head from the window and scooted back into the corner to meditate. What was wrong? As the wheels kept turning, rolling them farther and farther away from New Hampshire, Infant’s thoughts turned back over the miles toward home.

She remembered the New England village made up of clusters of spotlessly white houses on the green hillside. She recalled how it looked at dusk as she was going up the hill toward home, when the lights began to pop out of the darkness one by one, like stars, until the twinkling hillside looked like the sky turned upside down. It always seemed that when she got up close enough she’d be able to reach out and pluck a star for her very own.

Infant lived in a big cream colored house, way up high on the hill. From there she could look out over the village.
PEGGY

by Evelyn Longman

John Herron Art Museum
FAWNS AT PLAY  

BY ANNA HYATT HUNTINGTON

John Herron Art Museum
and the surrounding countryside, and see everything. She liked to be up high.

That was why she liked her swing. At the right side of the big yard, in the row of pine and evergreen trees, there was one great tree, which, to such a little girl, looked as if it grew up so far that it must surely poke a hole in the sky. From the lowest branch, possible twenty-five feet from the ground, Father had hung a tire swing. Infant spent much of her time there. It was like the poem her Mother read that started, “Oh, how I like to go in a swing, up in the air so blue.” She loved to swing way up and out — up almost as high as the roof and out so far that she could see the dim snow-capped peak of Mt. Kearsarge in the distance. It was a grand feeling, almost as if she were floating on a cloud, way up in the air and looking down at the world — only her cloud stayed up but a second, then dipped quickly, so that she had to pump it up again.

It was the hills and mountains of New England that enchanted her — the delicious “up high” feeling, as if she were on top of the world. In New England you didn’t measure height by how tall you were, but by how high you could climb.

Just then Mother said, “Why so quiet, little mouse?” and brought her out of her reverie. She decided to have another look, got up on her knees, and stuck her head out of the window.

As she looked she began to feel queer again. She could see farms up close to the road and farms very far off. She could see everything for miles and miles. That was funny; you couldn’t do that in New Hampshire; the houses there were always half hidden behind hills. It must be because . . . . why, that was it! That was what made her feel so funny. It was level, just as if a great steam roller had gone over the land and flattened out all the bumps. There were no mountains, not even any hills.

A great glistening tear rolled down Infant’s check. She’d expected that there’d be a new school, a new house, and of course there would be new friends to make. Only this morning she had heard her Mother say to Dad, “I do hope Infant will understand about moving and having a new home and new friends. I’m so afraid she won’t. She’s so little.”

Well, she hated to disappoint Mom and Dad, but she’d have to explain that they must turn around and go back home. She couldn’t live in this horrid, dreadful, flat place where she could never get up high. Why, there weren’t even any little hills, just small bumps in the ground.

They’d been driving through a city and now Dad had stopped in front of a big white house. “Well, Infant,” he said, turning around, “How do you like it?”

Now was the time to tell him. They were waiting, smiling, pleased and expectant. A wave of homesick longing for the green grassy hills and high pine-clad mountains of New England swept over her. She’d tell them now. Infant looked up at the familiar waiting faces. In that moment she took her first step toward “growing up”. She dropped her eyes and gulped. “Fine,” she said . . . “I like it fine.”