

feel like a giant beside me, asking me if I pay half-price at theaters, or offering to give me a pair of stilts for Christmas. I can see over people's shoulders now, and I don't get trampled in crowds. My feet touch the floor when I sit down, I don't have to drive sitting on a pillow, and no one asks me if I fibbed about my age to get a driver's license. At dances, I don't spend the evening with a beautiful view of nothing but my escort's belt buckle, and no bright boys wonder what cradle he robbed. I'm not too short to model, clerks don't try to direct me to the junior department when I shop for clothes, and I spend no more tedious hours putting hems a foot deep in all my skirts. Furthermore, I needn't climb on a chair every time I want to reach a high shelf!

That was fun—I didn't realize what I'd been missing! I have to come down from my high horse, though; what is, is, and what is not, is not. I'm still short, and I haven't found a people-stretcher. My head will still become sore from being patted and my neck stiff from looking up. People will continue to remark cleverly that I'm too small to be in college, that their ten-year-old sisters are taller than I am, that I ought to carry a stepladder in my pocket. Members of the opposite gender who fall on their knees before me will be teasing rather than romantic, unless they happen to be shoe salesmen. Simpering self-styled humorists will probably never cease inquiring if I shrank the last time it rained, if I'm dressing up in my mother's clothes, or if I also come in the large economy size. They'll go on alluding to me as "pocket edition" and "short stuff." So please remember, the next time you start to ask me whether I'm standing in a hole or sitting down, that you're not in the least original. I've heard that one before.

Lost to the World of Fantasy

Shirlee Smith

JAMIE JACKSON sat looking through the rain-streaked window of Mercy Hospital as he tried to think back through the preceding events of the year. Why should he suddenly be so alone and miserable? As Jamie listened to the rain falling on the tiled roof, he remembered some of the occasions that his family had shared together.

The Jacksons had been happy in their small community. Many friends liked them and considered the Jacksons to be a model family. Jamie now visioned the memories of the times in which the family would go up to the bluff on Sundays for picnics; he talked about the summer months that they spent at the lake; and he spoke wistfully of the hunting trips that he and his father had taken last winter. As they would walk through the woods stalking game, how new and fresh everything had seemed, and how it had almost been a wonderland, especially on late fall mornings when a thick coating of frost

covered the trees making them look as if a leprechaun had sprinkled diamonds and had forgotten to retrieve them in the morning. This memory and a few others were with him day after day. Jamie's life had seemed like one long merry-go-round ride; but always the ride ended abruptly and cruelly.

The day had started out as any other Saturday morning might have. There had been a generous supply of thick snow on the hills; so they had decided on tobogganing that afternoon. Mid-way through the morning, Mr. Jackson had received an urgent phone call concerning his business, and the tobogganing plans had been changed to those of trip preparations. Late in the afternoon, Jamie had stood waving goodbye to his parents with Madge, the housekeeper.

The following week passed rapidly; there were classes at school during the day and games after dinner in the evening to keep him busy. But even so, by Friday he was anxious for his parents' return Sunday afternoon. Sunday finally arrived and with it a thick coating of ice over all uncovered surfaces. Sunday evening Jamie went to bed reluctant that he had not seen his parents' return. Monday evening, Madge told him as carefully as she could about the automobile accident, then took him to the city hospital to see his parents. Later that week there was a double funeral for Mr. and Mrs. Jackson; and Jamie went home with Madge, without parents for the rest of his life.

As the days passed, Jamie lived in a dream world, unable to accept reality. He remembered the promise that he had given his father—take care of mother like a man. He felt alone as he thought of this promise and its uselessness. He remembered how he had walked down along the path that led to the forest. The thought that perhaps he could find himself here; maybe life would resume its previous form if he could walk through the woods as he and his father had on their hunting trips.

As he walked down the path, he wondered why the trees did not seem as tall and stately as before. The trees were now strangers to him. From the path Jamie walked on to the bluff where his father and he had camped. There were the rocks and clearing where it seemed that the trees had stepped aside to afford the happy campers a restful place, but now Jamie realized that this spot was just a clearing and nothing more. He turned and started back to the house, realizing that he would never be able to recapture life as it had been only a few weeks before.

In the spring, Jamie received another shock when he was told that he had poliomyelitis. His world of reality faded as he was told that he would never walk again. As the doctors repeated the phrases of "wheelchair," "invalid," "never walk again," Jamie was thinking about the camping trips. He had found that the forests had lost their magic, and only dreams satisfied him now. He didn't care if he was a cripple—not at all.