

Morning View Kentucky
29 March, 1956

Hello Mr. McCarthy,

I hope you saw the sunrise this morning. It was so irresistible I watched myself completely off schedule. Migrant acres of Kansas and the other Dust Bowl states had the sun by the throat, strangling it to a pallid ghost of itself. It was equally interesting to look off to the Southwest away from the sun. An almost invisible film sapped the landscape of much of its color, giving it an overlay of strange grey light, surprisingly similar to the eerie half-tones into which the countryside is plunged by a solar eclipse. The dust was irritatingly evident in the air, making my lips unpleasantly gritty when I licked them, and evoking snorting protest from the sensitive noses of the dogs.

X The hedgerow along the line fence on the far side of the pond-field is having a bad spring. It is a nice hedgerow -- irregularly spaced tall trees bound together by a lower growth of sassafras and redbud, sparkled by an occasional dogwood.

Three of the big trees went down when the little twister, angling across an open slope, blasted them before reaching the tree patch.

In yesterday morning's pre-dawn thunderstorm, the hedgerow suffered another casualty -- a tall rock elm was struck by lightning. At the first pause in the rain, I went over to inspect it.

On the way I spoke to Mrs. Fur as she licked her daily salt from one of the little salt wheels I fasten to the trees. She is a most amiable grey squirrel, yearly raising her family as close to the house as possible. It is amusing to watch her if she happens to be on the ground when I go out the door. She stops eating and watches. If I am alone, she continues with her food, but if the dogs emerge too, she retreats to the lowest branch of the nearest tree to finish her repast, knowing the puppy has not yet learned restraint and will occasionally try to catch her.

Once in the pond-field, I saw, near a clump of buckbush, the rabbit I rescued and raised on a bottle several years ago. She thrived on the same formula I was using for supplementary puppy feeding -- half carnation milk and half water, laced with lime water and Karo and a dash of vitamins. When she was larger I poured it over pablum.

I detoured around her, for, though she does not fear me, I had seen her recently in that locality carrying miniature hay stacks in her mouth, and knew her nest was near. Rabbits always carry their carefully selected nest grasses firmly gripped in the middle, making the ends