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Farm Poetry

Leroy Thomas

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BOVINELY THANKLESS

Jerze, you're still in my software.
 All I have to do to
 Access you is push a button or two,
 And there you are on my screen.

Ours was a strange relationship.
 You always seemed to be against me,
 Although no one on the farm did more for you than I did.
 Why did you hate me, Jerze? You would have starved in summertime
 If I hadn't staked you in the grass beside the highway
 (And how I secretly grumbled at Dad for making me do such a thing).
 I couldn't count with solar calculator the number of
 Buckets of water I have drawn for you only to be
 Sprayed with a chilly shower from your snuzzle.

And, Jerze, why did you always kick over
 The milk bucket and swish me with your cockleburred tail?

FARM POETRY

By Leroy Thomas

LINES TO A MR. PIGGY

I saw you again today a-choking a tree
 And then bad thoughts came gushing over me
 Of all the times of childhood days my dad would glibly say,
 "Now, Son, it's time for you to feed the pigs again today."

And then I'd go out to fields a-grumbling all the way,
 Not really caring if pigs were fed or starved to death that day.
 I'd pull those weeds and take them to the pen
 'Til I'd begin to ache and wish that someone else could feed the piggies then.

So now, Weed, you say you have a new name — *amaranthus retroflexus*, indeed
 To me, you'll always be no more than pigroot or careless weed!

FARMHOOD JOYS
1940'S

When I was a child, I played with butterflies,
 Field rabbits, squirrels, woolly worms, fruit-jar rings,
 Bottle caps, tin cans, grasshoppers, frogs, and pieces of coal.
 Butterflies and crickets and all those things were free then
 And still are in some places!

"Good day, Mr. Grasshopper," I'd say;
 "Spit tobacco juice, and I'll turn you loose!"
 I had my own "acting rod" out behind the barn.
 I could pretend I was a man on a flying trapeze
 Or a gymnast in a circus on late spring days.

I could read about the Bobbsey twins and the Hardy boys
 And then go out and try all the things they had done.
 There was no TV to interrupt those vicarious joys.
 Sometimes on the hot nights of summer, I would strip naked at the well
 And pour gallon after gallon of cold water over my body.
 And in wintertime after an ice storm,
 I could ride my bike over every field on our sandyland farm.

Today I live in an asphalt jungle,
 And my children's joys are artificially produced.

*DR. LEROY THOMAS, a SOSU English teacher for
 almost thirty-one years, is WESTVIEW's Editor.*