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## Soul Mate / The Little Cotton Trees

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Clarence Christian

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*Memories are no compensation*

## Soul Mate

By Fanny Dodgen

Life had accustomed me to a sympathetic ear  
 until this unwanted guest invaded our domain.  
 Now soul-felt needs fall on uncomprehending ears  
 and unseeing eyes.  
 This loved one spends time on the treadmill  
 of meaningless tasks  
 He feels the compulsion to go here or there  
 for imagined meetings  
 or rushes to open the door for parents long departed.  
 Vague recognizance of once-familiar objects  
 catches a fleeting attention as he says  
 "I want to take that with me when I go."  
 Nights he tosses covers,  
 puts heavy feet on the floor and rises falteringly  
 to leave behind a trail of lights  
 on the way to the cold living room.  
 Once there, he slouches into a relaxed position  
 "so I can rest"  
 Time continues regardless of the frustration  
 of that ill-understood disease  
 that possesses my loved one with its obsessions.  
 There must be a reason for one to be chosen  
 to share its unexpected quirks.  
 Meanwhile the time-consuming invasion stalks  
 into more and more of my moments and days.

*Not necessarily just a beautiful memory*

## The Little Cotton Trees

By Clarence Christian

Oh, I know you have troubles,  
 But listen will you please?  
 My old back is aching;  
 I have scars on my knees  
 I picked the white cotton  
 From the little cotton trees.

From the Canadian River bottom  
 To Lake Lugert rows,  
 I picked the white cotton  
 Until the cold winter snows,  
 From Hydro to Hollis  
 And all the way back,  
 I chased white cotton  
 To fill my long sack  
 From dawn of the morning  
 Until darkness of night,  
 I picked the white cotton —  
 To cotton so white

Along the big river,  
 Where the water ran red,  
 A sackful of cotton  
 I used for my bed.

My brothers, my sisters —  
 My mom, my dad, and me —  
 We picked the white cotton  
 From the little cotton trees.

Oh, I know you have troubles,  
 But listen will you please?  
 My old back is aching;  
 I have scars on my knees,  
 I picked the white cotton  
 From the little cotton trees.

Western Oklahoma cotton,  
 Very best of all,  
 Along the big ditches  
 Where the cotton grows tall