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Soul Mate / The Little Cotton Trees

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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.

LABORER

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