

Miss Hooker Poems

by Gale Acuff

Take, Eat

God, sure, I love Him, and Jesus, not to
mention the Holy Ghost, Which I just did
or is that Whom? And Miss Hooker, of course,
my Sunday School teacher and mighty damn
good at what she does, which is to save my soul,
my poor immortal soul, from Satan, in
Hell where he belongs but we don't, she says,
we should go to Heaven and every
Sunday after class Miss Hooker asks me
if I'm ready, ready to get saved, but
I usually decline, which means that
I say no, we learned that in regular
school, what decline means, I mean—I'm just not
ready yet, I tell Miss Hooker, and she
smiles, or maybe grins, and asks, Why not? but
she says it more than asks it. I don't have
a good answer, I guess I'm a coward
or just plain chicken and today when I
got home for Sunday dinner that's just what
was on the table, chicken, fried chicken.
Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you.

Dispensation

At Sunday School today I didn't see
the light like the song says I should, what I
saw was Miss Hooker's red hair, I see it
every Sunday but this morning it was
different somehow, more like blood I guess
but it wasn't dripping from her head like
the blood from Jesus' side where they pierced
Him with a spear, a Roman spear, the blood
He bled for me Miss Hooker likes to say
but I guess the Romans helped was what I
would've interrupted her to say in
class but instead I kept my trap shut
and let her go on with it again but
it seems to me that if mankind is sin
-ful then we might be helping to get our
-selves out of sin, the way Mother tells me
when I spend the night at a friend's house not
to embarrass her and Father but Be
somebody, she says, so I surrender
and anyway sin's not as fun away
from home as in it. One day I'll marry
Miss Hooker, bloody red hair and all and
we'll have a family, babies I mean,
one after another, like Pez
and forget that she's 25 to my
10, I'll catch up eventually and
keep her younger and anyways she's my
ticket to Heaven, I'll bet she never
sins, or not much, not so's you can tell
even though she says that all folks come short
of the glory of God. She's too modest.