

## THE TRANSFORMATION OF A CHILD INTO A ROLE GATE

One fall morning I awoke a mere lump of unformed buzzy expanding universe of nothing: In short: I was but a small time actor in a theatre of all possibilities with no role, a mere walk on who must spend all their time and attention viewing scenery, the audience, principals, without intervention and at any moment I wished to, I could pleasure the doze of the just born. This morning I was given a role. For the first time, I actually listened. I heard— Rise and shine. Why you've grown another foot. So now you have three feet. Oh. Oh. It isn't the cough that carries you off it's the coffin they carry you off in. It's time to brush your teeth. Get up. G-e-t-u-p. D-r-o-p-y-o-u-r-d-r-e-a-m-s. D-o-n't-p-i-g-y-o-u-r poke. Wake up. . . It's time to go to school. Come on. You'll be late. Don't pick your nose. We'll pick it for you. If there's anything in it for us. Put on your clothes, Ugly. Brush your teeth. Put on your clothes. I can see up main and down central. You can pick your nose and you can pick your friends but you can't pick your friends nose. Don't fart. It's impolite. Don't say, Well what did you expect, chimes? Get right up this minute. Don't scratch or I'll have to send you to Dr. Rash. You don't know how hard life is. You're always making it worse. Put your clothes on. Get Dressed. Wash your face. Wash. Stop that. Stop stalling. Where did you learn to do that? Wash your hands. What do you want for breakfast? You can't eat nothing. What do you want for breakfast? You're old enough to make your own. It's not hard. Stop that. Make up your mind. Coffee? Velveeta? Ho Ho's? Egg Rolls? No. Cereal? Yes. Learn to cooperate. Don't pretend to puke. You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. Don't act so smart. Sit up straight. Don't put your foot in your cereal. Don't put your nose in your cereal. Don't put your hand in your cereal. Don't put your elbow in your cereal. Stop stalling. Don't gulp. Don't put your eyeglasses in your cereal. Chew with your mouth closed. If you talk with your mouth full, you'll choke to death. You'll miss the boat. The border police will arrest you. Stop stalling. How will you ever earn a living? Eat it. Eat it right now. Don't fool around. Eat it or y-o-u'-l-l-d-i-e-o-f-s-t-a-r-v-a-t-i-o-n. D-o-n't-p-l-a-y-w-i-t-h-f-o-o-d. Don't wander around while you eat. Go to the bathroom and don't for get to wipe. Did you wipe? Did you wipe right? How many times do I have to tell you this? Put the seat up when you pee, down when you're done. Hurry up. Drink your OJ. Eat your toast. Eat your cereal. Drink your milk or you'll be late for school. You'll get arrested if you don't go to school. Take your lunch. Take your coat. Did you put on under wear? Did you wipe? OK. Hit the road. Get out. Get malaria. Stop crying. You'll end badly. Don't look at me like that. Remember you're a witness for Jesus. You know who Jesus is. Stop stalling. You're in for a big surprise. Don't talk to strangers. I walked. Suddenly my hair was combed, my nails were clean, no apples of the earth grew behind my ears, my arm pits were sweet, my loins untouched. I could pretend I believed three and three quarter tons of useless crap. I walked to The Big House of mind death to pretend to learn five tons more for I was smooth in my unused role of toilet paper: I was ready to learn to get a-h-e-a-d. T-o-l-i-c-k-s-h-i-t. I-n-s-h-o-r-t. I-w-a-s-a-n-A-m-e-r-i-c-a-n.

Stars shine bright on shatter light. Small dark stars in gas nurseries all  
Fire ask: Am I ready to learn to eat shit and do dull things I hate for a  
Bowl of dumb crap? Thee The. That's some do. Some do not. Not every  
Hamlet can walk out of the castle and not every Heathcliff can stay away,  
Nor every Moby Dick swim away from over morbid control freak jerks. And  
Not just any unused roll of toilet paper can fly off the roller and remain unused, Folk<sup>s</sup>.